

Guidelines for Nonuse of Harmful Substances for Textiles and Clothing

Japan Textile Federation

Date of development:

December 22, 2009

Revised on September 10, 2012

Renamed and revised on September 1, 2015

1. Background and purpose

Amid consumers' growing interest in safety and security of various products in recent years, it is an important challenge to continue to meet the request of consumers for safety and security in textile products including clothing as well.

From the viewpoints of ensuring the safety of textile products that are distributed in Japan and promoting harmonization with the relevant regulations in other countries, the "study committee on environmental and safety issues in the textile industry (renamed in January 2015 to the "committee on environmental and safety issues")" was formed in September 2008, and the issues have been examined since then. While there was a move afoot in the government to introduce the laws and regulations concerning specific azo dyes which produce aromatic amines by reductive cleavage, the voluntary standards were developed in December 2009 by the textile industry ahead of the national regulation for the supply chain as a whole with the aim of providing safer and worry-free textile products.

In Japan, textile products are regulated under the "Act on Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances, Act No. 112 of 1973" not to allow toxic substances to mix into final products. Under the new act that was promulgated on April 8, 2015 and will be enforced on April 1, 2016, some azo dyes are added as controlled substances. Along with the enforcement of this act, the existing "voluntary standards" are renamed to "guidelines," and the textile industry will continue its efforts to further improve safety of textile products as the top priority issue to be addressed.

Also, the guidelines provide for the recommended standards to eliminate harmful substances as much as possible from a wide variety of textile products that are handled in the activity area of Japan Textile Federation.

2. Guidelines

Applicable substances	Azo colorants (dyes and pigments) which generate 24 substances of specific aromatic amines by specified test methods.
Standard values and rules	As a result of reductive decomposition of azo groups by the prescribed test methods, those azo colorants (dyes and pigments) from which specific aromatic amines are detected in excess of 30 µg/g (mg/kg) from textile products must not be used.
Proof method	Analysis based on the specified test methods (However, such analysis is not necessary, if there are written nonuse declarations of dye makers, dyeing companies and others.)
Analysis method	Methods that are proposed by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (in conformity with the ministerial ordinance promulgated in 2015) Or, JIS L 1940-1 & 3: 2014, ISO 24362-1 & 3: 2014, EN 14362-1 & 3: 2012 For (leather materials), both ISO 17234-1: 2015 and ISO 17234-2: 2011 are applicable (analysis standards are reviewed whenever they are revised).

* As for specific aromatic amines, see Annex 1.

- Though pigments are not subject to the relevant laws and regulations, as azo compounds (including dyes and pigments) are listed in the government ordinance, the guidelines continue to be applied to pigments as voluntary efforts for ensuring safety and security of textile products.
- Though the unit of reference values is expressed as µg/g in conformity with the “Act on Control of Household Products Containing Harmful Substances, Act No. 112 of 1973,” it is equivalent to mg/kg. (For your information, a list of dyes that are known to generate 24 substances of specific aromatic amines is shown in Annex 3.

3. Applicable products

The scope of application of the guidelines to textile products includes the following products that are presented in the Standard Commodity Classification for Japan:

The numbers in parentheses represent the classification numbers designated by the Standard Commodity Classification for Japan.

Applicable items	Applicable products
Apparel, except footwear and apparel accessories (78)	Outwears and intermediate wears (781), intimate apparel (782), nightwears (783), “wafuku” (Japanese style apparel) (784), hosiery (785), “tabi” (786), headwear (787), gloves and mittens (except rubber) (788), and other apparel (except footwear and apparel accessories) (789)
Apparel accessories (79)	Handkerchiefs (791), neckwear (792), accessories of Japanese clothings, “obi-dome” (sash band), “han-eri,” “susoyoke,” “furoshiki,” etc. (794), and other apparel accessories (799)
Household textile articles (82)	Floor coverings (821), beddings (822), tablecloths (825), towels, bath mats and related articles (827), and other household textile articles (829)

* For details, see Annex 2.

Note: It should be noted that as leather goods (including fur goods) will be regulated, in addition to textile products, under the regulations on azo dyes, which are slated to be enforced on April 1, 2016, leather (and fur) that are used as subsidiary materials of textile products are also subject to the guidelines.

4. Operation (for details, see Annex 4)

Efforts are made to create a foundation for further improvement of safety by checking the conformity with the standards with referring to the written declaration of nonuse of applicable substances in each stage of supply chain and by identifying the traceability of products.

The manufacturers or distributors should assume legal responsibility for their individual products.

5. Supplementary provision

The guidelines should be reviewed as appropriate to add applicable substances.