

FEPA · Tour First, 11th Floor · 1 Place des Saisons ·
92400 Courbevoie · France



Shaping your Future with Abrasives

European Commission
DG GROW

B-1049 Brussels/Belgium

Anne Hagen
General Secretary

Phone: +33 (0)6 08 95 77 32
Email: a.hagen@fepa-abrasives.org
Web: www.fepa-abrasives.org

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Statement of the abrasive industry, a key member of the supply chain of all essential productions

Following the decree of the Italian authorities on 22 March 2020 to close all non-essential productions and the requirement from the members of the supply chain of essential productions to notify local authorities to continue production, the manufacturers of abrasives represented by FEPA and its national associations thought it important to highlight to national and European authorities that the abrasive industry is a horizontal market spanning across countless industries. Most particularly, abrasive products are used in the manufacture of virtually all industries defined as essential in fighting Covid-19.

By this letter, the European abrasive manufacturers hereby request that the European Commission considers the industry as a vital member of the supply chain of essential productions.

Abrasive products, important for essential products

Abrasives are used in the manufacture of essential industries such as:

- Medical Devices: hypodermic needles, respirators, pumps and valves
- Pharmaceutical
- Agriculture: machinery, peeling process
- Food Industry
- Defense
- Logistics Equipment: truck engine

The abrasive industry, a vital supplier to the medical industry

Without abrasives, some key components needed by the medical industry could not be produced.

From a mechanical point of view, some parts necessary in the pump, valves must be honed, grinded and only abrasives tools can get the right accuracy. Without abrasives tools, the target tolerance cannot be achieved and the end-products will be defective, unusable or worn out quickly.

President:
Jan Cord Becker

General Secretary:
Anne Hagen

FEDERATION OF EUROPEAN PRODUCERS OF ABRASIVES

A European Interest Representative (EU Transparency Registry Id. No. 884099437411-41)

A Non-Governmental Organisation representing the European Abrasives Manufacturers in Coordination with National Abrasives Associations

All the cutting tools such as scalpels used in surgeries or in intubations (a life-saving practice in so much demand right now) must have sharp edges. This quality cut is only possible by using abrasives wheels. Without them, the surgeon will not have the correct precision.

High precision bearings are used in micro blood pumps, which ensure a stabilization of the vital functions during heart surgery. These micro blood pumps are much less demanding on the patient than conventional heart-lung machines. Surgery patients and accident victims are ventilated externally on stationary and mobile respirators.

The abrasive industry, essential suppliers of the food industry

Without any doubt, the food industry is an essential sector in the current Covid-19 crisis.

Abrasives are a key player in the supply chain of the food industry because abrasive tools are required for sharpening and maintenance of all cutting machines and knives, milling and pulverizing. Without abrasives, most food (e.g. meat, vegetables, cheese) would not be processed because the equipment would no longer work.

Beyond the current crisis, the food sector prescribes to the basic principles of supply and demand. During the crisis, the demand for basic food ingredients is higher but the confinement restrictions complicate the ability of supply to adequately respond to the demand because of lack of human resources and logistics complications. Further disrupting the supply chain during and after the crisis will create a bigger imbalance that will take more time for European economies to recover from.

Statement on the occupational, health and safety of the abrasive industry's employees

Before, during and after the Covid-19 crisis, the health and safety of the abrasive industry's employees have always been its top priority in the use, handling and storage of any equipment, hazardous or not.

Even prior to the worldwide and national acknowledgement of the coronavirus spread at the end of February 2020, a majority of European abrasive manufacturers put in place a corporate travel ban when they recognize the first signs of health risks to their employees.

Since the escalation of the crisis, stricter measures such as reorganizing the shifts to practice social distancing have been put in place in abrasive plants while the non-essential staff have all been sent home to telework.

Cordially,



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