

General Explanation for the Restrictions on the Importing of Mercury-Added Products

Mercury can enter the human body through inhalation or swallowing and cause harm. Once it is in the body, it is difficult to be excreted, and it may cause symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, etc. Its long-term accumulation may even cause damage to the brain, nervous system, liver, kidney, lung and other organs. In addition, mercury does not break down easily and has the characteristic of biological concentration. If it is not properly recycled and treated, it may cause environmental pollution as it circulates in the environment, causing harm to humans. "Gradual restriction and eventual ban of mercury" has become an international trend. The United Nations' Minamata Convention on Mercury entered into force on August 16, 2017. The provisions of Article 4 paragraph 1 and Annex A of the Convention stipulate that manufacture, import or export of mercury-added switches and relays, high-pressure mercury lamps for general lighting purposes, and non-electronic measuring instruments (barometers, hygrometers, manometers, thermometers, sphygmomanometers, etc.) is prohibited from January 1, 2021.

The Environmental Protection Administration, Executive Yuan announced the enactment of the "Restrictions on the Imports and Sales of Mercury Thermometers" on March 26, 2008. In addition, on July 5, 2019, it announced the amendments to the "Categories and Management of Handling for Toxic Chemical Substance" to ban the use of mercury in the manufacture of switches, relays, high-pressure mercury lamps for general lighting, and non-electronic measuring instruments from January 1, 2021. It serves as a timetable for the announced ban on the manufacture of the aforementioned mercury-added products. As for imports, further control is required. In view of the harm of mercury to the environment and human health, with the development of electronic equipment and consumer electronics, the demand for the use of mercury-added products has been decreasing. Therefore, in

accordance with the authorization provisions of Article 21 of the Waste Disposal Act, and in line with the "Minamata Convention on Mercury," this announcement was made. Starting from January 1, 2021, the imports of mercury-added switches, relays, high-pressure mercury lamps for general lighting, and non-electronic measuring instruments (barometers, hygrometers, manometers, thermometers, sphygmomanometers, etc.) are prohibited to strengthen domestic mercury control and achieve the goal of maintaining environmental safety. The main points of this announcement are as follows:

1. Mercury-added products prohibited from being imported. (Announcement 1)
2. The provisions of the exceptions and exclusions for the prohibition of importing mercury-added products, and the relevant documents that must be presented by importers applying to the central competent authority for review. (Announcement 2)

Restrictions on the Importing of Mercury-Added Products

Announcement	Explanation
Subject: "Restriction on the Importing of Mercury-Added Products" takes effect on January 1, 2021.	It is to specify the name and effective date of the announcement.
Legal basis: Article 21 of the Waste Disposal Act.	Legal basis
<p>Announcement :</p> <p>1. The imports of the following mercury-added products are prohibited :</p> <p>a. Switches and relays, except very high accuracy capacitance and loss measuring bridges and high-frequency radio frequency switches and relays in monitoring and control instruments with a maximum mercury content of 20 mg per bridge, switch or relay.</p> <p>b. High-pressure mercury lamps for general lighting</p> <p>c. Non-electronic measuring instruments such as barometers, hygrometers, pressure gauges, thermometers (including body thermometers), sphygmomanometers, etc. But it does not include those installed in large equipment or used for high-precision measurement.</p>	<p>With reference to the import-prohibited items and implementation dates of mercury-added products listed in Article 4 paragraph 1 and Annex A of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the imports of mercury-added products such as switches and relays, high-pressure mercury lamps, and non-electronic measuring instruments are prohibited starting January 1, 2021.</p>
<p>2. The mercury-added products prohibited from being imported in the preceding paragraph, if one of the following situations is met, may be imported with approval by the central competent authority after supporting documents have been submitted for review:</p> <p>a. Products essential for civil protection and military use.</p> <p>b. Products for research, calibration</p>	<p>1. In reference to the provisions of Annex A of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the exceptions are to exclude the mercury-added products for specific uses.</p> <p>2. Practical management. If there is a demand for importing mercury-added products listed in Announcement 1, supporting documents including but not limited to supporting documents</p>

Announcement	Explanation
<p>of instrumentation, for use as reference standard.</p> <p>c. Where no feasible mercury-free alternative for replacement is available for the products in Subparagraphs 1 and 3 of the preceding paragraph.</p>	<p>of "no viable mercury-free alternative products," or other supporting documents designated by the central competent authority should be submitted to the central competent authority for review, and they may only be imported after the approval by the central competent authority.</p>

Restrictions on the Importing of Mercury-Added Products

Subject: Restrictions on the Importing of Mercury-Added Products

Basis: Article 21 of the Waste Disposal Act

Announced items:

1. The imports of the following mercury-added products are prohibited :
 - a. Switches and relays, except very high accuracy capacitance and loss measuring bridges and high-frequency radio frequency switches and relays in monitoring and control instruments with a maximum mercury content of 20 mg per bridge, switch or relay.
 - b. High-pressure mercury lamps for general lighting.
 - c. Non-electronic measuring instruments such as barometers, hygrometers, pressure gauges, thermometers (including body thermometers), sphygmomanometers, etc. But it does not include those installed in large equipment or used for high-precision measurement.
2. The mercury-added products prohibited from being imported in the preceding paragraph, if one of the following situations is met, may be imported with approval by the central competent authority after supporting documents have been submitted for review:
 - a. Products essential for civil protection and military use.
 - b. Products for research, calibration of instrumentation, for use as reference standard.
 - c. Where no feasible mercury-free alternative for replacement is available for the products in Subparagraphs 1 and 3 of the preceding paragraph.