Adkwik

WHITEPAPER

Formaldehyde Legislation:

Changes in August 2026 and what you need to do about it

2026

Why the law is changing

From August 2026, new EU restrictions on formaldehyde emissions will take effect under Regulation (EU) 2023/1464, part of an update to the REACH Regulation. These changes were introduced because:

- Formaldehyde is classified as a Group 1 carcinogen, with well-documented health impacts in indoor environments.
- The EU aims to significantly reduce indoor air pollution from manufactured products.
- Adhesives and resins used in wood-based materials, furniture, and construction products are among the largest contributors to formaldehyde emissions.

To address this, the regulation sets strict maximum emission limits for products placed on the EU market:

- 0.062 mg/m^3 – furniture and wood-based indoor products
- 0.080 mg/m^3 – all other indoor articles

Compliance must be demonstrated using standard chamber test methods such as EN 717-1 and EN 16516.

Although the UK is not required to follow EU REACH, any UK manufacturer exporting to the EU must meet these standards to maintain market access. Many sustainability frameworks (BREEAM, LEED, IAQ certifications) are also moving in the same direction, making lower-emission products commercially advantageous even for UK projects.

How this affects your business

For manufacturers using adhesives in bonded wood based or composite products, the new limits have direct implications:

Products at risk

+ Furniture
+ Wood based panels
+ Interior fit out products
+ Composite assemblies
+ Construction materials

Key impacts on manufacturers

+ Adhesives containing formaldehyde releasing resins (UF, MUF, etc.) may no longer meet the new limits.
+ Finished products must pass emission chamber testing, not just raw material assessments.
+ Products failing to comply cannot be sold within the EU after August 2026.
+ Supply chains will face increased scrutiny as buyers seek low emission, compliant materials.

What manufacturers must now consider

+ Do current adhesive systems allow finished products to meet the new emission thresholds?
+ Is there a need to switch to formaldehyde-free or low emission adhesive technologies?
+ Are internal processes (application, curing, press cycles) optimised for new adhesive chemistries?
+ Has the business built the appropriate compliance documentation and test evidence?

The shift is significant but manageable with the right preparation.

How Adkwik can help

Adkwik provides specialist support to help manufacturers meet the new formaldehyde emission requirements with minimal disruption and maximum confidence.

Compliance and process review

We work with you to assess:

+ Adhesive systems currently in use
+ Bonding processes and application rates
+ Product types and compliance risk
+ Likely emission profiles

This gives you clarity on where you stand and what action is required.

Guidance through the compliance pathway

We support you through the steps needed to prepare products for testing:

- Selecting the right test standard
- Preparing representative samples
- Understanding and interpreting chamber test results
- Building documentation for EU market requirements

Adhesive system recommendations

Based on your needs, we identify adhesive solutions that support:

- Compliance with Annex XVII emission limits
- Improved indoor air quality performance
- Alignment with BREEAM, LEED, and IAQ Gold expectations

Production process support

Where adhesive substitution requires adjustments, we can assist with:

- Process optimisation
- Application and curing guidance
- On-site technical support for production trials

Our own formaldehyde free product: Ubabond U30

Ubabond U30 is Adkwik's formaldehyde free, zero VOC adhesive, certified to Indoor Air Quality Gold.

It provides:

+ Immediate alignment with EU 2026 emission limits
+ Full compliance with leading IAQ schemes
+ Strong performance across a wide range of bonded assemblies

Shop now

Conclusion

The August 2026 changes represent one of the most significant shifts in indoor air quality legislation in recent years. Adhesives play a central role in formaldehyde emissions, making adhesive selection a critical compliance factor for manufacturers supplying the EU or sustainability driven UK projects.

By acting early reviewing your adhesive systems, assessing risk, and preparing for compliance testing you can ensure uninterrupted market access and strengthen your environmental credentials.

Adkwik is here to support you through every stage from assessment to adhesive selection, process optimisation, and achieving full compliance.

Get expert advice

Hands-on support from the experts

Adkwik offers support, training, and troubleshooting for adhesive application. Whether you're setting up a new process or refining an existing one, we can help you keep production running smoothly.

Adkwik

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