

# Chemicals plan

Växjö municipality 2016-2020

Adopted by the municipal executive board 10 January 2017



Växjö   
kommun

*The Greenest City in Europe*

# Preface

We have in our society large numbers of different chemicals which are harmful to children and adults. Awareness of the risks entailed has grown in the last few years. Children are more sensitive to the impact from chemicals, which is why the municipality is focusing on their everyday surroundings.

Chemicals is one of the action areas in the Väckjö municipality's environmental programme. We want to achieve the following objective by 2030: "Väckjö municipality is free from harmful chemical substances to the extent that neither the environment nor people are exposed to any adverse impact. The municipality's organisation and its inhabitants are well aware of the chemicals issue. The municipality adopts a strategic approach with a particular focus on children's everyday lives."

The chemicals plan gives the municipality the opportunity to deal with the chemicals issue in a more systematic way, to increase people's knowledge about which chemicals are present in their everyday activities and to gradually replace the products which may pose a risk to health and the environment. Surroundings where children are present are the number one priority.

The chemicals plan is part of our effort in being Europe's greenest city!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Anna Tenje". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anna" and the last name "Tenje" clearly distinguishable.

Anna Tenje  
Chair of the Municipal Executive Committee

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# Introduction

Since time immemorial, Man has endeavoured to use nature to improve his life. Chemistry can probably be regarded as one of the oldest branches of science, which came about when people learnt to bake bread, ferment grapes and brew beer. Our economic growth is strongly tied to the production of chemicals. It has contributed to the success of industrialisation, which has also increased the demand for new chemicals. This trend has gained rapid momentum in recent decades, with new substances being produced which have contributed in different ways to the development of new products. Almost all the products featuring in our surroundings are a result of this development. We could not get rid of all chemical substances without bringing about an extremely radical change in our society. The use of chemicals is closely linked to our lifestyle through the products we purchase and the food and drink we consume. The production of chemicals is growing strongly throughout the world. From the 1930s until the end of the 20th century, annual production rose from 1 million to 400 million tonnes, with this growth continuing every year<sup>1</sup>. There are currently more than 100,000 different chemical substances registered with ECHA (the EU's chemical authority). Research is highlighting ever-more clearly that many chemical substances previously considered to be non-hazardous have an adverse impact on people's health and the environment. Far from all chemicals are hazardous and even natural substances can have properties which are harmful to health and the environment when used in the wrong circumstances. Children are additionally sensitive to exposure to chemicals as their bodies are not fully developed and they have a higher

level of exposure to chemicals in relation to their body weight. Therefore, we need to be actively involved in removing from circulation substances which we know or suspect of being harmful to health or the environment. There should be a particular focus on children's everyday lives.

Chemicals are an extremely topical issue and are discussed as part of the political agenda in Sweden, in the EU and UN. In Sweden the Swedish Chemicals Agency is the authority responsible for this area. Among the measures it has taken, it has drawn up an action plan for a toxic-free everyday environment. Within the EU, legislation is harmonised and applies to the entire internal market via the CLP Regulation on classification and labelling and REACH, which regulates registration, information requirements and restrictions, with the aim of increasing protection for human health and the environment against risks which may be caused by chemicals, as well as of boosting competitiveness within the EU's chemicals industry. An ever-growing number of municipalities are actively tackling the issue of chemicals as part of their environmental activities and have produced programmes and action plans for reducing the risk of chemicals having an adverse impact in their respective municipalities.

More detailed information about the impact chemicals can have on health and the environment and about the legislation and priorities in terms of tackling chemicals is available in the in-depth document provided as an appendix to the chemicals plan.

<sup>1</sup> Swedish Chemicals Agency's Action plan for a toxic-free everyday environment.



## Aims of the environmental programme

**VÄXJÖ MUNICIPALITY ADOPTED AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME IN 2014, WITH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2030:**

*Växjö is free from harmful chemical substances to the extent that neither the environment nor people are exposed to any adverse impact. The municipality and its inhabitants are aware of the chemicals issue. The municipality adopts a strategic approach with a particular focus on children's everyday lives.*

### **THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES SHOULD BE ACHIEVED IN RELATION TO CHEMICALS BY 2020:**

- » Växjö municipality will not procure/purchase as an authority any products/services containing chemicals which require a licence or are subject to restriction regulations (REACH, Annexes XIV and XVII). This will be completed by no later than 2020.  
*Main responsibility of: **All committees and company boards of directors.***
- » Växjö municipality will have drafted, as an authority, a chemicals plan by no later than 2016.  
*Main responsibility of: **Municipal executive committee.***
- » Växjö municipality will have removed from pre-school institutions by no later than 2016 toys and equipment containing hazardous chemicals.  
*Main responsibility of: **Education committee.***



## Objective of the chemicals plan

The objective of the chemicals plan is to reduce the exposure to undesirable substances in chemicals and products which are available in and procured by all the municipality's administrative departments and companies, with the overall aim of moving towards developing a toxic-free everyday environment. This will help the municipality achieve the objectives in its environmental programme by 2030 and the national environment target of a Non-toxic environment.

### **SCOPE, MONITORING AND DELIMITATION**

The chemicals plan covers all the administrative departments and companies in Väjö municipality. The plan also includes the municipality's inhabitants, businesses and other public agencies. The plan is adopted by the municipal executive committee, which means that the

actions featuring in the plan only apply to the municipality as an organisation, while the municipal administrative departments and companies are responsible for the activities which are implemented as part of this. There is one or more committee or company responsible for each action. They are responsible for the actions being implemented within the relevant internal budget. There are also administrative departments and companies involved in some actions. They are expected to be involved in implementing the action. Monitoring is carried out as part of the committees' year-end procedures. The areas for waste, contaminated soil, food, air and water have been designated separately as these areas are governed by different legislation and other plans adopted by Väjö municipality.

# Focus areas

The structure for the plan's objectives is divided into six different focus areas, with each focus area being assigned different actions and responsibilities to share.

- » **INVENTORY OF CHEMICALS WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL GROUP**
- » **CHEMICAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE CASE OF PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES**
- » **COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**
- » **CHEMICALS IN BUILDING MATERIALS AND PRODUCTS**
- » **CHEMICAL SUPERVISION**
- » **“CHEMICAL-SMART” PRE-SCHOOL INSTITUTION**

The priorities and objectives are structured according to chemicals legislation and the recommendations made by the Swedish Chemicals Agency and procurement authority.



## » FOCUS AREA 1

# Inventory of chemicals within the municipal authority

The knowledge regarding which chemicals are used in different parts of the municipal authority is unclear. Chemicals which are or will be prohibited under legislation must be replaced by less hazardous chemicals. With the aim of increasing knowledge about which chemicals are present in our society, substances are analysed and assessed in wastewater and silt.

ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTICIPANTS
<b>1. Chemical inventory</b>	1.1 Current analysis: record and document substances and mixtures of chemical products in a list of chemicals, along with relevant safety datasheets, as required by the environmental certification. 1.2 Report about existing chemicals which should be phased out according to the candidate list, PRIO or SIN list to the coordinator. 1.3 Review the requirement and acquire a common chemicals database for the municipal authority.	Municipal executive committee	All committees and companies
<b>2. Phasing out the most hazardous chemicals</b>	2.1 Replace chemicals which are undesirable based on their property criteria and appear in the Swedish Chemicals Agency's PRIO list or SIN list.	All committees and companies	
<b>3. Extended recording of substances in our lakes and water courses</b>	3.1 Monitoring of chemical substances – focusing on metals and inorganic substances in sludge and effluent from waste water treatment plants.	Technical committee	



## » FOCUS AREA 2

# Chemical requirements for procurement

The municipality can control which chemicals are used within the authority over time through the products and services it purchases. All major purchases and service orders are carried out using a public procurement procedure. By setting requirements for chemical content and making a declaration in procurement procedures, we can avoid undesirable substances in the purchases made by the municipal authority.

ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTICIPANTS
<b>1. Setting requirements for chemicals in public procurement procedures</b>	1.1 Draft a guide on how to set chemical requirements in public procurement procedures and ensure that all the procurement agencies within the municipality are familiar with them. 1.2 Establish extensive chemical requirements for procuring services and for contracts involving earth-moving and construction work.	Municipal executive committee	All committees and companies
<b>2. Devising procedures for monitoring the requirements set in terms of the environment and chemicals</b>	2.1 Devise procedures for monitoring chemical requirements which have been set, focusing on priority article groups. 2.2 Introduce the option to impose a penalty in the event of a breach of contract in the tender material. 2.3 Set requirements for the level of chemicals expertise among suppliers.	Municipal executive committee	All committees and companies
<b>3. Improving purchase procedures with regard to the chemical content of the good/product</b>	3.1 Provide training to all purchasing managers on the labelling and impact of chemicals to be able to make informed choices when purchasing.	Municipal executive committee	All committees and companies
<b>4. Increasing cooperation on chemicals</b>	4.1 Set up a chemical committee for the entire municipality, tasked with helping procurers establish requirements in terms of the environment and chemicals. 4.2 Cooperate with other municipalities in the region in procurement procedures focusing on children's everyday lives.	Municipal executive committee	Technical committee, Environment and health protection committee, Education committee and companies

## » FOCUS AREA 3

# Communication and information

There is a low level of knowledge in general about chemicals and their impact on people and the environment. This needs to be increased in different ways to be able to promote the trend towards a non-toxic environment. Different stakeholders in society, such as businesses, elected officials and private individuals all need to know about the impact of chemicals. Communication initiatives need to be coordinated within the region so that the recipients obtain the same information.

ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY	PARTICIPANTS
<b>1. Coordinating communication about chemicals and their impact on people and the environment</b>	1.1 Cooperate with the Region, the other municipalities in the county and the County administrative board on communication about chemicals and their impact on children. 1.2 Disseminate knowledge about the impact of chemicals on health, the aquatic environment and silt in schools and to the general public.	Municipal executive committee	Environment and health protection committee, Education committee, Technical committee
<b>2. Developing knowledge about chemicals within the municipal authority</b>	2.1 Hold seminars aimed at officials and elected representatives to increase their knowledge about chemicals and their impact on health and the environment.	Municipal executive committee	Environment and health protection committee, Education committee, Technical committee
<b>3. Providing information about chemicals to businesses</b>	3.1 Inform the business sector and other relevant industries about the chemical-smart approach to business. 3.2 Hold information briefings on chemicals legislation and planned initiatives.	Municipal executive committee	Environment and health protection committee

## » FOCUS AREA 4

# Chemicals in construction materials and products

The buildings and installations which we construct or renovate nowadays will stand for many years. The impact of substances which are harmful to the environment and health can be reduced by choosing the right materials. This will enable us to minimise the impact of chemicals on the external and internal environment.

ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1. All new buildings must be designed according to an environmental building standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 Materials must be selected which meet the criteria of the Basta/Beta or equivalent schemes.</li><li>1.2 Any deviation from the requirements must be documented and monitored.</li><li>1.3 Carry out a cost analysis of the increased requirements, if necessary.</li></ul>	Companies
<b>2. Setting requirements for chemicals in contracts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.1 Establish requirements in contracts for registering a list of chemicals with candidate list substances designated in contracts.</li><li>2.2 In the case of renovations, materials must be selected which meet the criteria of the Basta/Beta or equivalent schemes.</li></ul>	Technical committee and companies



## » FOCUS AREA 5

# Chemical supervision

The supervision work carried out by the environment and health protection committees is an important tool for verifying that chemicals are handled safely in the municipality. By providing advice, the committees have significant opportunities to reach out to many activities and influence positive developments.

ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1. Developing chemical supervision in the retail sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 Increase the checks on chemical substances in stores</li><li>1.2 Increase supervision checks for chemicals in building products.</li></ul>	Environment and health protection committee
<b>2. Developing chemical supervision with regard to activities posing an environmental risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2.1 Request information about the use of substances being phased out and reducing the risk in activities posing an environmental risk.</li><li>2.2 Carry out checks on the handling of chemicals in the case of substances being phased out and reducing the risk.</li></ul>	Environment and health protection committee
<b>3. Supervision visits targeting focus areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3.1 Make supervision visits to all the pre-school institutions (private and public) in the municipality, offering advice on how to make them "chemical-smart".</li><li>3.2 During supervisions visits to retailers, the focus is on products aimed at children.</li></ul>	Environment and health protection committee

## » FOCUS AREA 6

# “Chemical-smart” pre-school institution

Children are more sensitive to chemicals than adults. Their brains, immune systems and hormone systems are not fully developed. They also breathe more quickly and eat and drink more in relation to their body weight. Small children who explore their environment through touch and taste are definitely vulnerable in particular. Therefore, it is a good idea to check their immediate environment and try to avoid products containing such chemicals which may pose an increased risk. This makes it important to ensure that they have as healthy an environment as possible when they are in pre-school.

ACTIONS	ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1. Creating a “chemical-smart” pre-school institution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 Devise an action plan for creating a “chemical-smart” pre-school institution with the support of the environment and health-protection committees.</li><li>1.2 Make the pre-school's staff and parents in all the municipality's pre-school institutions familiar with the action plan.</li><li>1.3 Monitor the action plan's measures on an annual basis.</li><li>1.4 Draw up an investment plan for achieving the targets.</li><li>1.5 Provide pre-school staff with the knowledge about what it means to be a “chemical-smart” pre-school.</li></ul>	Education committee



# Producing the plan

The chemicals plan has been produced through cooperation between various administrative departments and companies. The municipal executive committee is the requester. This task has been headed up by a steering group comprising heads from relevant sections of the municipality's organisation. The plan has been produced by a project group comprising officials with expertise in the various focus areas from the municipality's administrative departments and companies.

The political basis for this work has been provided by the environmental committee comprising: Bo Frank (M), Åsa Karlsson Björkmarker (S) and Cheryl Jones Fur (MP).

The project group's draft plan has gone through a consultation process with relevant company and administrative organisations. An information briefing and discussion were held with relevant administrative heads and officials. The views presented have been taken into consideration by the project group. The authority's executive subsequently approved the draft plan, which was then adopted by the municipal executive committee.

## STEERING GROUP

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## PROJECT GROUP

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## IN-DEPTH DOCUMENT

There is an in-depth document as an appendix to the chemicals plan, which describes the issue of chemicals in greater depth and the legislation governing chemicals. That document is only available in Swedish.

[www.vaxjo.se/miljo](http://www.vaxjo.se/miljo)



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