



EHEDG Secretariat * Lyoner Str. 18 * D-60528 Frankfurt

To all EHEDG Certificate Holders

26 June 2017

IMPORTANT CERTIFICATION SECOND NOTICE

Dear Sirs,

The European Hygienic Engineering and Design Group (EHEDG) values your continuing support and participation in the equipment certification program. We believe this program increases the marketability of your equipment as demonstrated by your commitment to hygienic design and food safety principles.

On 21 February 2017, you were notified of changes coming to the EHEDG Certification program. This notice, understandably, generated many questions and concerns. The intent of this second notification is to provide you with the answers, as well as to introduce a specific Transition Plan for accomplishing any re-certifications which you choose to pursue.

Background

Over the years, EHEDG has continued to grow and increase its membership around the world. This increased expansion required organizational changes to improve the ability of EHEDG to provide the services that all have come to expect. On 1 January 2015, EHEDG embarked on a path to improve its organizational structure and services to our valued members. These improvements include the election of members to an Advisory Board by the full membership, a revision of the organization, its statutes and by-laws, as well as the creation of three Sub-Committees (Product Portfolio, Communications, and Regional Development) to assist the Executive Committee (ExCo) with its long-term strategy as well as the day-to-day operations.

The Sub-Committee Product Portfolio is tasked with the oversight and management of the EHEDG guidelines, the test institutes, certification of equipment, all training materials and authorized EHEDG training courses. The Advisory Board has endorsed two significant proposals for the Sub-Com to implement. The first is to centralize the certification of equipment at the EHEDG Headquarters. The second is to implement a 5-year life cycle for the revalidation of all equipment certifications.

Certification Centralization

Our goal is to centralize all of the certificates and to have them issued by a Certification Officer nominated by EHEDG Headquarters, Frankfurt, Germany by the end of 2017. The process will be essentially invisible to you and not impact the procedures by which you seek certifications. Your certificates will come to you from a different office, while the test institutes will continue to perform equipment evaluations and any required testing as they always have. However, upon successful completion of the evaluation and testing, the appropriate documentation will be sent to the Certification Officer for the issuance of the certificate itself. Both the Test Institute and the Certification Officer will be pleased to answer your questions about EHEDG Testing and Certification.

Transition Plan for the 5-Year Re-Certification Policy

Certificates issued prior to 1 January 2008:

These certificates will be withdrawn from the list of Certified Equipment on the EHEDG website on 1 January 2018. EHEDG has determined that this action is necessary to protect the integrity of the EHEDG Certificates for the benefit of all equipment fabricators and the users of this equipment throughout the food industry worldwide. All options suggested by Certificate Holders were evaluated but found to not safeguard certificate integrity as they were issued under older guidelines or test procedures. This withdrawal from the website does not affect any items currently sold and in operation. However, it does prevent fabricators from displaying the certification mark on any of those items produced after the withdrawal date.

Certificate Holders affected by the withdrawal are encouraged to review their equipment designs against current EHEDG guidelines and test procedures to determine if the cost of any necessary redesign is warranted with the cost of re-certification. All equipment from this period that requires testing will have to be retested according to the current procedures. This is a business decision that only the Certificate Holder can perform.

Certificate Holders that wish to pursue re-certification are responsible for contacting the Test Institute of their choice. The Test Institutes will process the requests on a first-come-first-served basis. EHEDG is prepared to encourage all Test Institutes that have available capacity to assist with testing to ensure the most expedient service. Should this occur, there are three possibilities for the Certificate holder to consider:

- a. The initiating Test Institute will conduct all other hygienic design evaluations, documentation, and issuance of the certificate upon receipt of a completed test report.
- b. The subcontracted test institute shall independently bill the client for the testing costs.
- c. The initiating Test Institute shall independently bill for their certification costs.

Unfortunately, TNO is no longer an authorized Test Institute. However, Certificate Holders may still contact TUV Rheinland for re-certification. TUV can subcontract with any other Test Institute to conduct any required testing necessary for the re-certification. TUV is in the process of installing the necessary facilities and an AEO (Authorized Evaluation Officer) to become a fully authorized Test Institute in the future. EHEDG will notify the industry when TUV has been authorized.

Equipment which successfully meets the requirements of the current guidelines and test procedures will be issued a new certificate. The new certificate will bear a projected date for when the next 5-year re-certification will be required. This will help the Certificate Holder with future scheduling.

5-Year Re-Certification Procedures for all Certificates issued after 1 January 2008:

Certificates issued since 1 January 2015 have a calculated 5-year renewal date printed on the certificate. These certificates will be removed from the website if not renewed in advance to their expiration date. Certificate holders are encouraged to contact a Test Institute to start the renewal process 1 year prior to expiration.

Certificate Holders having certificates issued between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2014 are advised that it is their responsibility to contact their Test Institute as soon as they can to re-certify their equipment.

- a. Certificates dated between 1 January, 2008 and 31 December 2011 will be withdrawn from the website on 1 January 2019 if they have not been re-certified.
- b. Certificates dated between 1 January, 2012 and 31 December, 2014 will be withdrawn from the website on 1 January 2020 if they have not been re-certified.
- c. Any certificate holder that has contracted for re-certification before the withdrawal dates listed in a. or b. above will not be removed from the website.

Certificate Issue Date	Expiration or Renewal Deadlines (contract cancelled & certificate removed from website)
Prior to 1 Jan. 2008	1 Jan 2018
1 Jan 2008 – 31 Dec 2011	1 Jan 2019*
1 Jan 2012 – 31 Dec 2014	1 Jan 2020*
1 Jan 2015 – present	1 Jan (5 year renewal year listed on certificate)

* These certificates will not be removed if the re-certification process has been initiated with a Test Institute prior to the withdrawal dates.

Upon contracting for re-certification for the 5-year cycle, the Test Institute will review the most recent evaluation and testing documentation to determine if the equipment requires a new design review and/or additional testing.

- a. A new design review and/or testing may be required when there have been changes in the covering guidelines, changes in the design that may affect cleanability, changes in the elastomers currently in use, or other details which raise concerns with the Authorized Evaluation Officer (AEO). When a new design review and/or additional testing is required, the new certificate will be issued upon satisfactory completion of the review and/or testing.
- b. If a file indicates to the AEO that no guideline or equipment changes have occurred since the initial certification, a new certificate will be issued.

As with all other re-certifications, Test Institutes may advise applicants that they can contract with any other test institute that has available capacity to conduct the required testing to improve the efficiency of the re-certification process.

- a. The initiating Test Institute will conduct all other hygienic design evaluations, documentation, and issuance of the certificate upon receipt of a completed test report.
- b. The subcontracted test institute shall independently bill the client for the testing costs.
- c. The initiating Test Institute shall independently bill for their certification costs.

In summary, a Transition Plan has been developed to expedite the process of re-certification, with focus on transparency, reliability and ownership. The Test Institutes will continue to work directly with you, the client, and invoice you for the costs of providing that service. In addition when the certification centralization has been implemented, EHEDG Headquarters will issue all certificates and invoice you separately for the cost of the certificate. It is important that each certificate holder maintains a close relationship with the Test Institute of his choice so that there is sufficient time to perform all necessary evaluations and testing to assure there is no gap in the dates of valid certificates.

EHEDG will be staffing a new position of a Certification Officer to handle all questions and concerns about the certification process. The details of this new position will be published on the EHEDG website as soon as the information is available.

On behalf EHEDG, I look forward to the continued successful association with your company.

Yours sincerely,

Ludvig Josefsberg
EHEDG President

Centralisation of the EHEDG Certification – Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why is it important to mention the gasket / sealing material on the certificate?**
The cleanability of the various materials are different. There are often substandard elastomers used that have high porosity, mould defects, and hardness variations that effect cleanability.
- **Is it true that old certificates could be even more valid compared to the new ones as the test criteria were more strict?**
Adamantly NO.
- **What exactly are the differences of the test criteria before and after 2008?**
The test rig reference pipes were standardized as to surface texture and length. The surface finish characteristics are evaluated during yearly audits to recertify the test rigs. The test rigs are accredited by ISO.
- **Can EHEDG clearly specify these differences in its documents for better understanding?**
All of the current EHEDG guidelines are available to all members on the website.
- **Will all re-testing have to be made in the test rig, or will it be possible to only have a theoretical assessment? If so, in which cases?**
If re-testing is required, it will be performed in the ISO accredited test rig. However, there are cases in which some EL Class 1 certificates can be re-certified without further testing, provided the guideline for the equipment has not changed and the equipment conforms to all hygienic design principles with no internal angles or radii and contains no elastomers.
- **What does EHEDG recommend to the certificate holders? Should they be proactive in contacting the institutes right now? It is expected that the waiting times will be very long if all certificate holders come up with a renewal request at the same time.**
Please see the transition plan outlined in our letter dated 26 June 2017.
- **Costs for the companies will be significant, and staff capacities in the design departments are very limited.**
EHEDG testing and certification is voluntary and an added value both for the equipment manufacturer and for the user, to clearly identify the component as hygienically designed. It is up to the company's decision if they like to apply for certification or not. Each Certificate Holder will have to make the business decision of whether or not a particular certificate is worthy of the cost of re-certification.
- **How can EHEDG impose disadvantages to those companies who have supported the organisation and the certification system for a long time by now making their certificates invalid?**
The decision to establish a limited lifetime of all certificates was taken by the EHEDG Executive Committee upon request of our food industry members and upon recommendation of the EHEDG Advisory Board, to clearly identify certified components compliant to state-of-the-art requirements. The proposed changes are to protect the integrity of the EHEDG Certification program. A strong and consistent certification program benefits all users. It is prejudicial to categorize these actions as “punishment”.
- **Wouldn't it be possible to just keep the old certificates valid and in place? Everybody knows that the more recent certificates have a lifetime of 5 years, and this would be motivating enough to apply for renewal instead of having to take action in a very short time frame.**
No. EHEDG has taken the position to be proactive in its actions to strengthen the Certification program.