

1st Edition
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Product Service

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ENV::Talk

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INSIDE:

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Dear Readers:

Welcome to the first edition of ENV::Talk, the new Environmental Testing Newsletter from TÜV SÜD Product Service. This newsletter is designed to keep you informed about regulatory changes within the industry, as well as keep you updated with our latest activities and services from TÜV SÜD Product Service.

We trust you will enjoy this second issue. If you have any questions on any of the related topics please contact us, and we will be happy to help.
Jean-Louis Evans - Managing Director

FAA issues safety alert on lithium batteries after UPS crash

The US FAA has issued a safety alert recommending that airlines adopt new procedures to reduce the risk of onboard fire posed by lithium batteries.

Airlines should ask customers to identify bulk shipments on airway bills and store such items in Class C cargo compartments, the FAA says. The agency also asks airlines to re-examine their own practices for transporting lithium batteries, as well as pay "special attention" to existing regulations.

The recommendations apply only to lithium batteries transported as cargo. Passengers and crewmembers can continue to use the power source without notifying the airline.

The safety alert was issued as the agency considers issuing a final rule with new proposals to reduce the risks of transporting such batteries. The proposed ruling is now under review by the Office of Management and Budget, which is the administrative arm of the White House.

Non-peer-reviewed results of a study by the FAA Tech Centre show that lithium batteries can enter a condition called thermal runaway and reach temperatures over 593°C (1,100°F).

The safety alert comes one month after UPS flight 006, a Boeing 747-400, crashed in Dubai.

"Investigation of the crash is still underway, and the cause of the crash has not been determined," the FAA says. "We are aware, however, that the plane's cargo did include large quantities of lithium batteries and believe it prudent to advise operators of that fact."

Lithium-ion batteries deserve respect!

Richard Poate, Compliance Service Manager at TÜV SÜD Product Service, commented "Lithium-ion batteries are found in more and more applications and whilst this chemistry provides great advantages in terms of performance, we must never forget that this chemistry is quite volatile and must be treated with respect. A key element of battery safety requires environmental and electrical testing to check their compliance during transportation. Here at TÜV we routinely conduct such tests including altitude simulation, shock, vibration, short circuit and over-charge. This recent incident just goes to reinforce the importance of battery testing in ensuring everyone's safety." TÜV SÜD Product Service is able to perform lithium-ion battery testing in accordance with UN Manual of Tests 38.3 Regulation. This regulation is part of a wider set of regulations set out to ensure safety of goods during transit across air, sea and land.

"Our climatic chambers are capable of simulating high temperature and humidity through to the freezing cold temperatures and high altitude of air travel" said Richard Thompson, Environmental Test Manager, at TÜV SÜD Product Service.

The environmental testing facilities at the purpose built testing laboratory in Fareham, Hampshire, covers an area of 1200m² and has a unique combination of test facilities.

It is also important that batteries are tested and that package handlers are trained to identify lithium-ion batteries from information provided and package markings and that they use approved methods for safe handling.



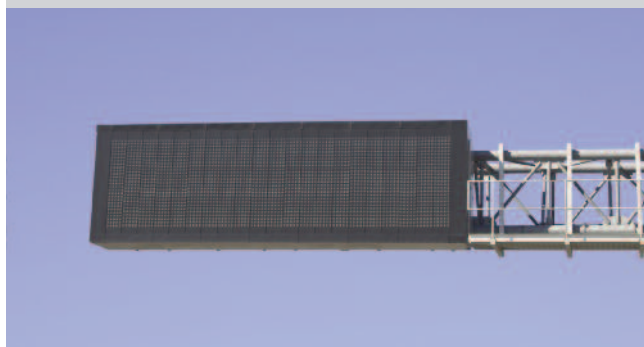
Testing for Traffic Information Signs

TÜV SÜD Product Service is now offering UKAS accredited testing of traffic information signs to ensure they meet both the UK Highways Agency and EU regulations. Compliance with these regulations allows for commercial use of the signs and therefore is vital to manufacturers and distributors of the products.

TÜV SÜD Product Service offers a 'one-stop' service for Traffic Information signs at its state of the art facilities in Fareham, Hampshire including EMC, Environmental, Safety and Optical testing all under one roof. As a Notified Body opinion is no longer required by the Highways Agency, manufacturers can now fulfil their legal obligations by having a third party organisation like TÜV SÜD Product Service carry out the relevant testing, product assessments and factory inspections. Our experts can also help you take all the necessary steps to meet the requirements of EN 12966-1:2005.



Through working with TÜV SÜD Product Service you will benefit from a wealth of knowledgeable engineers with over 15 years' experience in optical testing and the assessment of LED products, as well as being able to gain Highways Agency Product Approval through our comprehensive UKAS-accredited laboratory and offsite testing capability



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TÜV SÜD Product Service turns up the heat

In order to meet the growing customer demands for new services, TÜV SÜD Product Service has adopted a continuous improvement strategy to constantly develop its existing services, as well as regularly adding to its service portfolio.

The latest service upgrade relates to one of our eleven climatic chambers, within the purpose built 1200m² environmental facilities, situated in Fareham, Hampshire and the increasingly stringent demands of the leading civil aerospace manufacturers and their suppliers.

The service provides customers testing to specification RTCA DO-160, Section 5 – Temperature Vibration, which requires a 10°C per minute temperature rate change. The chamber dimensions are 1480mm x 1480mm x 1480mm, with a temperature range of -65°C to +120°C.

“The service has been available for several years using a smaller capacity chamber. However, the recent developments enable much larger test equipment to be tested to the specification”, said Richard Thompson, Environmental Test Manager at TÜV SÜD Product Service.

This important development to our facilities expands our ability to test larger equipment, increases our capacity and provides a greater choice of chambers with the benefit of further reducing our lead times.

Wheelie Bins... "Do we wheelie test them?"

MGB Plastics based in Rotherham, UK, is the largest manufacturer of Wheelie Bins in the UK, manufacturing over 1 million per year. What makes their products so good is their build quality and the ability to withstand the conditions of everyday use, year after year. Before coming to TÜV SÜD Product Service, MGB Plastics used a test laboratory in France, but they had faced language difficulties and increased costs due to travel and having to spend much time out of the office.

Wheelie Bins were an unknown product for TÜV SÜD Product Service, but the challenge of testing them was taken up. "Not only were we unfamiliar with the testing requirements, but we also needed to become fully conversant with the relevant specifications and the test methods. Our approach is that, even if it's something for which we have to develop a programme from scratch, we will try our best to find a solution," said Richard Thompson, Environmental Test Manager at TÜV SÜD Product Service.

The product which required testing was a 240 litre bin, with a maximum empty weight of 6kg. The customer required the product to go through 10 different types of testing to simulate typical use. To demonstrate the life of a product, the standards require tests to be repeated up to 1000 times, each repetition carried out using the same conditions as the last.

The tests the engineers at TÜV SÜD Product Service designed involved several different test platforms, which were compliant with the regulations and capable of maintaining test conditions. One of the challenges that the team faced was the procurement of specialist actuators to make sure that the product would accurately represent real life conditions, such as the speed and angle of use. A trial and error method was initially used for the kerb test, where several actuators were tried, each providing different pressures, strengths and speeds of lift until the right one was chosen.

Over the course of testing, the product needed to demonstrate that it was capable of withstanding the stresses of being dropped off kerbs, pulled, and lifted on to vehicles. Through designing a test plan to meet the appropriate standards, TÜV SÜD Product Service's experts helped to find a solution for MGB, and enabled them to have their wheelie bins certified. "We received a first class service and we will return to TÜV SÜD Product Service to test new products. In the future, we would definitely choose this UK test house over going abroad," said Keith Jones, Quality, Health & Safety Manager, at MGB Plastics.



Webinars: A new way of learning!

Webinars are a new medium that allow presentations and training to be communicated over the web. It is very simple to enjoy the benefits as all you need to view and hear webinars is internet access and a sound-enabled PC.

And our webinars are free and take no longer than 60 minutes!

Our webinars are presented by TÜV SÜD Product Service experts, providing you with up to the minute information that affects you as compliance professionals along with the opportunity to interact from the convenience of your office or home.

Upcoming Webinars

**Wednesday 23rd February at 14:00 -
An Introduction to EMC**

**Wednesday 30th March at 14:00 -
EMC Directive conformity of Defence Equipment**

For more information on these topics and to register for one of our webinars, please visit our website at www.tuvps.co.uk/webinars.

If you have any further questions, please contact Simon Middleton at smiddleton@tuvps.co.uk or Tel: +44 (0)1489 558221.

