



610

Information on incidents related to nonylphenol**Gerhard Dahlmann**

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In the Federal Republic of Germany nonylphenol was found in the feathers of 18 seabirds (2 in January 1986, 9 from October 1988 to February 1989, 7 in September 1989). They were already dead or died soon after they were found. Nonylphenol seems to be only a minor cause of the death of seabirds: from 1984 to 1989 40.000 seabirds were found dead along our coastline; of these 17.000 were oiled. The mere presence of nonylphenol, however, as a form of marine pollution requires action: earlier considerations about the origin of nonylphenol - bacterial degradation of nonylphenol ethoxylates, which are present in some detergents - could not be confirmed: under aerobic conditions nonylphenol ethoxylates are not converted into nonylphenol by bacteria. If nonylphenol is therefore found in the feathers of birds pure residues of nonylphenol might have been released into the sea. Nonylphenol is a MARPOL-category A product, the transport of which at sea requires special handling and controls (e.g. unloaded tanks have to be cleaned carefully before the ship is allowed to leave the port). The presence of nonylphenol at sea indicates serious violations of these regulations. In addition, nonylphenol must be regarded as representative of other dangerous chemicals which are transported at sea. The stringent MARPOL-regulations for category A products are obviously violated in isolated cases.

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