

The ATEX Explosion Protection Document is now compulsory for all operators of installations in hazardous areas (ATEX 137):

"The prevention of accidents must be seen not as a regulation prescribed by law but as a dictate of human obligation and sound economic sense" (quote by Werner von Siemens, 1880)

Planning and selection of equipment for workplaces in hazardous areas require particular care. A variety of laws and regulations exists in different countries with this in mind. The EU regulations and the ATEX Directive require compliance by manufacturers and operators alike.

The structural design of equipment for hazardous areas is governed by Directive 94/9/EC (ATEX). This ensures that manufacturers supply ATEX-compliant equipment. For the operators of installations in hazardous areas, the minimum regulations for improving health and safety protection at work are defined in Directive 1999/92/EC. The EU directives have each been converted into national law (in Germany, for example, the "Betriebssicherheitsverordnung" [Safety at Work Act]).

Under the terms of these directives, operators are obligated to draw up an "Explosion Protection Document." As well as dividing production areas into the appropriate "EX" zones, it also includes a classification of explosion risks and measures for promoting safety at work. The declaration of conformity covering the compatibility of components used from a safety perspective are included as part of the Explosion Protection Document.

At Sartorius, this Explosion Protection Document is usually a set of diagrams along with safety instruments, called "Verification of Intrinsic Safety." This documentation covers all configurations containing Sartorius EX products as an integral part of our supply package, and thus saves the customer time and money. Sartorius offers an EX safety consultation service for testing and, if necessary, documenting the combinability of its equipment with other manufacturers' components.

Every employer in Germany is required to have drawn up an Explosion Protection Document by December 31, 2005, at the latest for all installations. Across the EU, the Explosion Protection Document must be in place no later than on June 30, 2006. Time is pressing, therefore, for all operators of installations in hazardous areas.

