European Pallet Association e.V. (EPAL)

PRESS RELEASE

EPAL CP pallets – quality assurance and PPWR compliance for chemical logistics

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Chemical pallets (CP pallets) have been the pallet standard in chemical logistics since 1991. The European Pallet Association e.V. (EPAL) has worked with major chemical companies to update the technical specifications, ensuring the smooth use of EPAL CP pallets in automated logistics processes. By integrating CP pallets into the EPAL pallet pool, the chemical industry benefits from EPAL's independent quality assurance. At the same time, by using EPAL CP pallets, chemical companies meet the requirements of the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) on the reusability of transport packaging.

Chemical pallets (CP pallets) were developed in the early 1990s by the chemical industry in collaboration with wooden pallet manufacturers, including many manufacturers of EPAL pallets. Due to the special dimensions of containers for chemical products, such as drums, bagged goods, big bags or octabins, special pallet formats are required for the transport and storage of chemical products. Since 1991, nine types of CP pallets (CP1-CP9) have therefore been used in chemical logistics and have become the industry standard.

However, problems with the use of CP pallets have arisen in recent years. The lack of quality assurance for CP pallets has meant that, in practice, CP pallets often no longer have a uniform, standardised quality. EPAL responded to this in 2018 by introducing EPAL CP pallets, which have continuously gained market share in recent years, particularly in international supply chains. In 2025, several large chemical companies announced that they would exclusively purchase and use EPAL CP pallets from 2026 onwards. At the same time, the chemical companies began working with EPAL to further develop the technical specifications of CP pallets.

Dirk Hoferer, President of EPAL:

"CP pallets have been manufactured and used since 1991. It is therefore time for an update that ensures the consistently high quality of CP pallets by making EPAL's independent quality assurance part of chemical logistics. However, it is equally important to us to offer companies and associations in the chemical industry a permanent forum where the chemical industry's requirements for CP pallets and the expertise of wooden pallet manufacturers can be brought together. In the coming weeks, we will invite all companies and associations in the chemical industry to become part of this forum and discuss the CP pallet of the future with us."

There are several reasons why large chemical companies have decided to use EPAL CP pallets:

EPAL's quality assurance guarantees the high quality of EPAL CP pallets. This is particularly important when transporting chemical products and dangerous goods.
With the increasing automation of logistics processes, uniform and reliable dimensions of CP pallets are also important. Even deviations in pallet dimensions of a few millimetres can lead to disruptions in the automated transport or storage of loaded CP pallets. EPAL's standardization and quality assurance are therefore particularly important for the ongoing automation of chemical logistics.

Regulatory requirements are equally important. On 11 February 2025, the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) came into force. Among other things, it stipulates that from 2030 onwards, at least 40 percent of transport packaging must be reusable. For transports between companies belonging to the same enterprise and for transports within an EU member state, there is even a 100 percent reuse target. This also applies to CP pallets. However, pallets and other packaging are only considered reusable if they are part of a reuse system that meets the requirements of the PPWR. The EPAL pallet pool is such a reuse system. By using CP pallets, chemical companies therefore ensure that their pallet logistics comply with the PPWR.

> **Jarek Maciążek, President of EPAL:**
> *"Since 1991, CP pallets have become the international industry standard for chemical logistics. However, new challenges such as the automation and digitalisation of logistics processes and the legal obligation to reuse pallets in a reuse system require the established system to be adapted. By integrating CP pallets into the EPAL pallet pool, we want to support the chemical industry in meeting quality and regulatory requirements and to define the new industry standard for chemical pallet logistics together with the chemical industry."*

The use of quality-assured EPAL CP pallets also optimises the duration of pallet reuse. High-quality EPAL CP pallets can be used and reused for several years. This reduces costs and promotes sustainability in chemical logistics. Participation in the circular economy of the EPAL pallet pool is therefore also an important aspect of chemical companies' sustainability reporting.
The next step in development will be the digitalisation of EPAL CP pallets. The labelling of EPAL CP pallets with QR codes is already in place and allows for easy tracking of goods transport, which is particularly important in the chemical industry. The use of active trackers on EPAL CP pallets is also part of the further development of EPAL CP pallets in the EPAL Innovation Lab.

About EPAL:
The European Pallet Association e.V. (EPAL), founded in 1991, is an international non-profit association and organises the open EPAL pallet pool. More than 1,700 EPAL licensees produce and repair EPAL Euro pallets and other EPAL load carriers. Currently, more than 675 million EPAL Euro pallets and around 20 million EPAL box pallets are in circulation, which makes the EPAL pallet pool the largest open pallet exchange pool in the world.
With its principles of reusing, exchanging, repairing and recycling pallets, the open EPAL pallet pool has been a prime example of a sustainable circular economy for more than six decades. EPAL wooden Euro pallets make a significant contribution to climate protection. They store CO_2, avoid waste, reduce the need for wood and thus improve the carbon footprint of users in industry, trade and logistics. EPAL Euro pallets are the backbone of the supply chains of industry, trade and logistics in Europe.

Further information for journalists:

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