Pollution Prevention (Products)

Goals and Progress
- Contamination Rate of Chemical Substances
  Plans call for reducing the volume of specified toxic substances, such as lead and PVC, used by at least 50%, compared with products introduced in fiscal 1997, on a per unit product basis for all products developed after fiscal 2001.
  - We have been promoting the assessment of the volume of chemical substances contained in products as well as starting the development of a project to reduce the use of certain substances, including lead solder.
- Emissions of Chemical Substances and Noise
  Plans call for reducing the noise level emitted more than 2 dB and emissions of ozone and other gases by at least 20%, compared with products introduced in fiscal 1997, for all copiers, facsimiles, and laser printers developed after fiscal 2001.
  - Activities are underway to expand areas of assessment and improve technologies that reduce emissions of our products.

Concept of the Prevention of Pollution by Ricoh Products

Environmental certifications, such as Germany’s BAM or Scandinavia’s Nordic Swan Mark, set high standards for chemicals contained in and emitted by products. Y et, we have set up an environmental certification that is even more stringent than either of the above in order to minimize the use and emissions of chemicals that are hazardous to the environment and we are manufacturing products that meet those levels. We also control the chemicals contained in our products and the flow of chemicals in the manufacturing process using RECSIS. And we are developing a system that will provide the timely disclosure of information on the use of chemical substances as requested by our customers and OEM partners.

RECSIS

There are many substances that, while useful for a product’s manufacturing process, have undesirable side effects on the environment. The flow of these substances needs to be controlled so that those substances can be phased out, recovered, or properly disposed of. RECSIS contains 164 data types based on such ISO standards as those regarding basic database of more than 2,000 types of chemical substances, environmental hazards, toxicity, and emergency procedures. It also covers laws and regulations and their amendments concerning those chemicals in various countries. We have also begun collecting data on the chemical contents of the parts and materials we purchase as well as the use and volume of waste from chemical substances at parts manufacturing factories. With this database, it has now become possible to improve our products and business sites to achieve our pollution prevention targets.

Technology to Make Air Currents Visible

Noise Reduction Technology

The noise visualization system measures how much noise is emitted by which part of the product and makes possible quick design changes. Setting copier and printer functions so that fans and engines automatically stop after a certain period of time and supply electricity only to the part of the controller that is waiting in standby mode for data helps reduce noise emissions and conserve energy.

Ozone-Free Designs

Existing copiers and printers generate ozone from the reaction of oxygen with the electrode. Air currents around the air cleaner made visible Noise from the side of a copier made visible Noise from the top of a copier made visible Contact charging method (right) can control the generation of ozone Acquistion of International Certification at Noise Testing Center

Currently, the disclosure of the environmental impact information of companies and products is being demanded, and various issues are arising concerning the reliability of data and test centers. Ricoh’s Noise Testing Center acquired certification based on ISO standards in September 1998. This certification certifies the technical ability of the test center and the reliability of the test results reported. Ricoh is the first in Japan to have acquired certification by NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) on noise testing.

Noise/Environment Safety Website

The noise/Environment Safety Website replaces the previous pollution prevention website that provided information only on pollution prevention. It contains information on products which are pollution free, on environmental education, and on the company’s initiatives. Information sheet compilation, PRTR total environmental impact data, Environmental impact at manufacturing by model, Environmental safety at business sites, and Business sites with certified environmental safety are all provided.