

Customer Information

Novel Corona virus (SARS-CoV-2) and virus disease (COVID-19) – Risk from virus transmission and infection via printing inks and varnishes and printed layers

Due to the spreading of the novel Corona virus (SARS-CoV-2) and the related virus disease COVID-19 around the globe, questions have been addressed to whether there is an enhanced risk of virus transmission via printing inks and varnishes or from printed layers. The answer to this, based on current knowledge and communication of expert communities round the globe and interpreted in analogy for printing inks and varnishes, is a clear “no”. This statement is based on communication of the WHO (World Health Organization)¹ and the German Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR)².

Spreading of the virus mainly takes place via airborne droplets through contact with an infected person or animal and subsequent inhalation. Till today infection routes via contaminated foodstuff or articles with dry surfaces, like packaging and paper bags, toys, cosmetics, food contact materials in general - including those imported from regions with high infection rates - have not been proven to take place. This is in line with knowledge and experience with other viruses from the Corona family. The reason is to be seen in the low stability of Corona viruses in the environment, especially on dry surfaces.

For SARS-CoV-2 there are first lab test reports on stability on surfaces available. For the tests an extreme contamination with a virus aerosol was considered, initially creating a humid surface. On cardboard, inactivation of the virus was observed after 24h, whereas on plastic inactivation took about 2 days. In conclusion, the lab tests revealed a significantly lower stability of SARS-CoV-2 compared to other viruses or bacteria spores. Different to these lab conditions and under practical conditions however experts would expect much lower stability of SARS-CoV-2.

Common household disinfectants and alcoholic solutions, like e.g. solvent based packaging inks would kill the virus immediately.

The information in this document reflects Siegwerk’s policy and commitments. This statement is valid without signature.

¹ WHO – Q+A’s 17.04.2020

² German BfR Q+A’s 30.04.2020