



EN 420 is now EN ISO 21420:2020 - General requirements for protective gloves

What exactly is EN ISO 21420:2020 about?

The well-known standard EN 420 (last valid version from 2009) applies to all protective gloves (from thin disposable gloves to thick reusable chemical protection gloves to gardening and motorcycle gloves). It defines the general requirements (and the corresponding test procedures) for design principles, glove assembly, harmlessness, comfort and performance, as well as the labeling and information to be provided by the manufacturer. Previously only a European standard, it has now been converted into the international standard ISO 21420:2020. In the course of this conversion, some revisions were made, and new requirements added.

When does the new standard apply?

The final draft FprEN ISO 21420: 2019 was approved in parallel by the European standardization bodies (CEN or specifically, the national committees) and the International Standardization Organization (ISO). The final ratification then took place in the first quarter of 2020 by both organizations (as EN ISO 21420: 2020 and ISO 21420:2020).

EN ISO 21420:2020, which is relevant for the European Economic Area, was formally published on September 30, 2020. This is the latest point in time by which this standard had to be implemented at national level by publication of an identical national standard or by approval. And it is also the latest date by which standards that contradict the new EN ISO 21420:2020 had to be withdrawn.

Unlike in the case of a change to the legal framework, new standards become valid without a transition period and are therefore immediately valid and applicable as soon as the new standard is published (or the previous standard is withdrawn).



According to PPE Regulation (EU) 2016/425, PPE that has already been placed on the market may continue to be sold. This applies to all products that are sold under a previously valid certificate. This means that all existing certificates remain valid.

Only when the PPE is newly brought onto the market (new product or new certificate), does it have to be certified in accordance with all newly published standards. Regardless of the legal framework, all protective gloves produced by Semperit already comply with the new standard.

What has changed compared to the previous standard EN 420: 2003 + A1: 2009?

EN ISO 21420:2020 contains the following fundamental changes that affect Sempermed products:

1. Harmlessness of the glove

As before, protective gloves must not have a negative effect on the health or hygiene of the user. Under the foreseeable conditions of normal use, the materials should not release any substances generally known to be toxic, carcinogenic, mutagenic, allergenic, toxic to reproduction, corrosive, sensitizing or irritating. Therefore, in addition to the previous pH check for materials containing rubber and plastics, PAHs (polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) have now been included as substances to be tested.

2. Glove dimensions

The minimum length specified in EN420: 2003 + A1: 2009 no longer must be adhered to on every protective glove. Previously, deviations from the minimum length of single-use gloves had to be justified by the intended use. To provide clear information to end users, we will keep the additional labelling on the packaging until further notice.

3. Identification of gloves

It has been made mandatory that every protective glove must be labeled with the date of manufacture and another means of batch traceability. Since the intended performance level of the glove can be significantly impaired by aging, an appropriate expiry date featuring the month and year must also be shown next to



the hourglass symbol, in accordance with PPE Regulation 2016/425. All Sempermed disposable protective gloves already feature the dates of manufacture and expiry as well as a traceable lot number.

4. Information from the manufacturer

Upon request from the end user, the manufacturer / distributor must provide a list of the substances in the glove that are known to cause allergies. Appendix G of the standard contains a list of allergenic substances that gloves can contain. Sempermed already provides detailed information on the substances used upon request from users.

Are the previously issued EU type certificates still valid?

The EU type certificates issued for category III PPE remain valid even after the change in standard.

Please contact us if you have any further questions on this subject.

Best regards,

Your Sempermed Team

