Management of Chemical Substances

Volume Reductions through Appropriate Management

We are further supplementing our chemical materials management systems and working to reduce the volume of environmentally harmful chemical substances used.

Management of Chemical Substances through the PRTR System

PRTR provides the framework for ascertaining the release of harmful chemical substances into the environment and makes this information publicly available. The PRTR makes it possible for government agencies to monitor the emission of harmful substances into the air and water based on reports and estimates of the relevant parties, as well as determine the movements of such substances released from waste, process this information, and make it public.
We have reduced our release of harmful chemical substances from previous levels. In addition, we also participated in a pilot project set up by Japan's Environment Agency that began in 1997 in the Nishimikawa Region and in PRTR surveys conducted by the Keidanren through various industry associations (in our case, the Japan Auto-Body Industries Association) and have developed systems for determining the volume of chemicals transferred. As the PRTR system will be incorporated into environmental legislation, we are now considering activities to further reduce the release of these chemicals and improve our systems for managing them as well as methods for disclosing related information.

Activities to Reduce VOCs

(VOCs: Volatile Organic Compounds)

We engaged in voluntary activities to reduce VOCs in accordance with directives issued by the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association and the Japan Auto-Body Industries Association.

Activities at the Nagakusa Plant

The spray nozzle employed in equipment for painting the exterior plating of automobiles was redesigned to reduce the volume of paint required, resulting in a 15% reduction of VOCs from previous levels. (See page 23 for further details.)

Recovery and Reuse of Fluorine Compounds

Recovery and Reuse of Substitute Fluorine HFC-134a

In 1994, we completely eliminated the use of fluorine compounds, such as CFC-12, which are believed to be ozone-depleting substances. Subsequently, we have substituted fluorine HFC-134a, which is not an ozone-depleting substance. HFC-134a, however, has received attention as a possible cause of global warming and reducing its use and emission has become an important issue. We make use of HFC-134a as a coolant in the development and evaluation of compressors as well as in the product inspection process. Slight amounts of this substance are emitted from our plants, but we are working to make continued reductions in the amount used, have introduced equipment to recover and regenerate fluorine HFC-134a, and are reusing the amounts recovered.

▲*Equipment for the recovery and regeneration of fluorine HFC-134a*