

SR2

COSHH essentials for service and retail



This information will help employers (including the self-employed and franchisees) comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), as amended, to control exposure and protect workers' health.

It is also useful for trade union safety representatives.

This sheet describes good practice using personal protective equipment (PPE).

It covers the points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level.

It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Some concentrates are biocidal products. Authorised products are safe for use so long as you follow the instructions on the label.

Some chemicals can be flammable, so your controls must suit those hazards too. Look at the safety data sheet for more information.

Main points

- Avoid or minimise skin contact with chemicals.
- Check that all the controls are being used properly.
- Consider substituting with safer products.

Diluting chemical concentrates

Control approach S

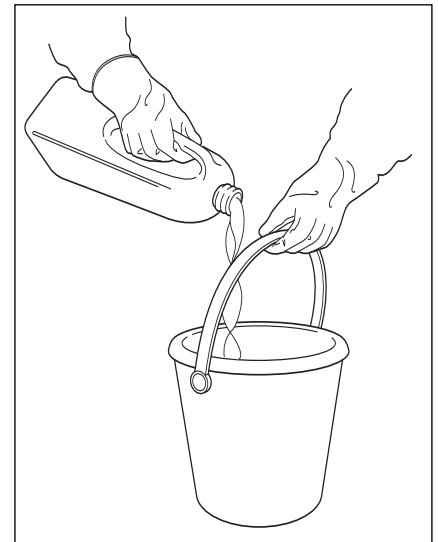
Harm via skin or eye contact

Access and premises

- ✓ Make sure there is enough room to do the job safely.
- ✓ Provide good washing facilities.

Equipment

- ✓ Ensure the equipment used with the product works properly, without leaks.
- ✓ Provide protective gloves.
- ✓ If diluting with a solvent, make sure the room is well ventilated; 5-10 changes per hour, with a through draught.
- ✓ Buy liquid chemicals in containers that are easy to pour from, don't dribble, and don't trap liquid in a rim.
- ✓ Try to buy solid chemicals in tablet or granule form, or in wide-necked containers so it is easy to scoop out.



Caution: Never decant concentrate into an unlabelled container.

Never re-use a concentrate container - dispose of it safely or return it to your supplier. Don't store more than 50 litres of flammable liquid indoors- use a flammables store.

Procedures

- ✓ Contractors using pesticides should have a British Pest Control Association (BPCA) qualification.
- ✓ Store products containing chemicals securely in a cool, dry, dark place, capable of retaining spills. Don't store far more than you need.
- ✓ Reduce skin contact - workers should wash off splashes immediately.
- ✓ Ensure that workers follow instructions for use by reading the label, and make up solutions for immediate use only. Make sure they are aware of the following general guidelines:
 - Add liquid concentrate to diluting liquid - never the other way round, unless the instructions say so.
 - Make a thin paste of powders with a small amount of diluting liquid, then dilute as for liquids.
- ✓ Put the cap back on the container immediately and wipe the outside clean.

Special care

- ✓ Contact with many chemicals can lead to dermatitis. Some can also damage the eyes.
- ✓ Some products may cause asthma - check the safety data sheet.
- ✓ Avoid products that contain hydrofluoric acid.
- ✓ Take special care using caustic soda (sodium hydroxide). This can erupt when mixed with water. Splashes in the eye can cause blindness.
- ✓ Never add any other chemical to concentrates that contain bleach (sodium hypochlorite solution). This can cause a dangerous gas (chlorine) to be given off.

Maintenance, examination and testing

- ✓ Wash out mixing equipment after use. Dispose of waste liquid safely.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Follow the instructions on product labels.
- ✓ Ask your supplier to help you choose the right PPE.
- ✓ Provide protective gloves - single-use nitrile gloves are acceptable. If you must use latex gloves, use only 'low protein, powder free' gloves.
- ✓ Throw away single use gloves every time they are taken off.
- ✓ Provide protective goggles to protect eyes when using products that can cause burns (eg acids, caustics).
- ✓ Skin creams are important for skin protection and help in washing contamination from the skin. These are not 'barrier creams'. After work creams help to replace skin oils.

Health monitoring

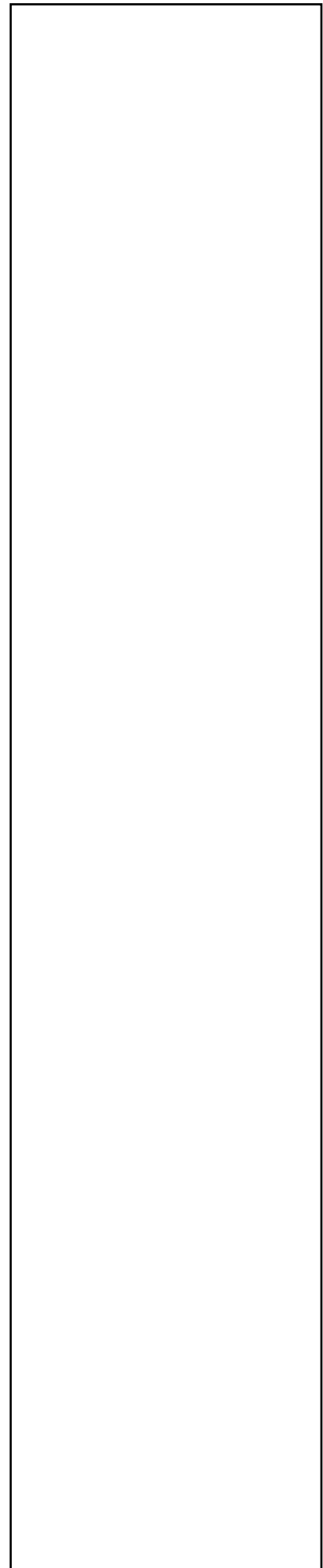
- ✓ Ask your workers to check their skin for dryness or soreness every six months. If these effects appear, check the proper use of skin creams and PPE.
- ✓ If you use a product labelled 'may cause sensitisation by skin contact' or 'may cause sensitisation by inhalation', seek specialist advice- See 'Useful links'.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- ✓ Clean up spills promptly - practise how to do this.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Tell workers about the risks of using the product - see products labels or Section 15 of the safety data sheet.
- ✓ If products can cause skin or eye damage, plan how to give first aid.
- ✓ Working in the right way and using the controls correctly is important for exposure control. Train and supervise workers. See sheet SR0.



Further information

- *Assessing and managing risks at work from skin exposure to chemical agents: Guidance for employers and health and safety specialists*
HSG205 HSE Books 2001 ISBN 0 7176 1826 9
- *Hydrofluoric acid poisoning: Recommendations on first aid procedures*
Leaflet INDG307 HSE Books 1999 (single copy free or priced packs of 25 ISBN 0 7176 1751 3 Web version available at hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg307.pdf)
- *Preventing dermatitis at work: Advice for employers and employees*
Leaflet INDG233 HSE Books 1996 (single copy free or priced packs of 15 ISBN 0 7176 1246 5)

Useful links

- HSE priced and free publications are available from HSE Books
Tel: 01787 881165 Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk.
- For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Textphone: 0845 408 9577 e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com.
- Contact the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) on 01332 298101 or at www.bohs.org for lists of qualified hygienists who can help you.
- Look in the Yellow Pages under 'Health and safety consultants' and 'Health authorities and services' for 'occupational health'.
- Also see www.nhsplus.nhs.uk.

Employee checklist

- If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don't just carry on working.
- Use and store your protective equipment according to instructions.
- Throw away single-use gloves every time you take them off.
- Wash your hands after use, and before and after eating, drinking, smoking and using the lavatory.
- Never clean your hands with concentrated cleaning products or solvents.
- Check your skin regularly for dryness or soreness - tell your supervisor if these symptoms appear.
- Use skin creams provided as instructed.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.