



COSHH MANUAL

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. IDENTIFYING SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH	1
3. INVENTORY OF SUBSTANCES	2
4. ASSESSMENTS	2
4.1 <i>Generic Assessments</i>	3
5. WORKPLACE EXPOSURE LIMITS	3
6. SAFETY PHRASE AND RISK PHRASE	3
7. CONTROL MEASURES	4
8. MAINTENANCE OF CONTROL MEASURES	4
8.1 <i>Respirators and other PPE</i>	4
8.2 <i>Face Fit Tests for Those Wearing Respirators</i>	5
9. EATING, DRINKING, SMOKING AND COSHH	5
10. INFORMATION INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING	5
11. SITE MANAGERS ACTION	6
12. PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC AND OTHER CONTRACTORS	7
13. HAZARDS FROM OTHER CONTRACTORS	7
14. SUB-CONTRACTORS TO THE COMPANY	7
15. SECTION 'B' GENERIC ASSESSMENT SHEETS	8
16. SECTION 'C' BLANK ASSESSMENT PROFORMA	9

1. INTRODUCTION

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations and the amendment regulations imposes a duty on every employer to:

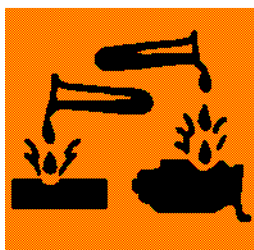
- Identify all substances in use, or likely to be encountered which could be hazardous to the health of employees (and others); and
- Assess the risk to their employees (and others) from the substance, taking into account the manner in which it is being used and the quantities involved.

2. IDENTIFYING SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH

"**Substance Hazardous to Health**" means that any substance (including any preparation) which is:-

- a) A substance which is listed in Part 1 of the approved supply list as dangerous for supply within the meaning of the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging) Regulations - (see current edition of CHIP Regulations for latest list) and for which an indication of danger specified for the substance in Part V of that list is very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant.
- b) A substance that has a specified workplace exposure standard as listed in HSE document EH40 "Workplace Exposure Limits".
- c) A biological agent.
- d) Dust of any kind, when present at a substantial concentration in air.
- e) A substance, not being a substance mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a-d) above, which creates a hazard to the health of any person which is comparable with the hazards created by substances mentioned in those sub-paragraphs.

TYPICAL SYMBOLS DENOTING A COSHH SUBSTANCE



CORROSIVE



HARMFUL



TOXIC



IRRITANT

Notes:

Exemptions from COSHH requirements includes work involving Asbestos or Lead, or substances which are a hazard solely by virtue of radioactive, flammable or explosive properties or solely because they are at high or low temperature or under pressure. These and other exemptions are subject to separate specific Regulations*. The asbestos and lead regulations both require an assessment of risk to be carried out for any work which involves exposure of persons to those substances and therefore the same principles can be applied.

(* *Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002*
Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002)

3. INVENTORY OF SUBSTANCES

A list of substances regularly used is indicated in this manual. However, different substances may be encountered on different sites and it is the responsibility of the site manager to check the substances in use against the substances listed in the manual and to make any necessary additions. If required, the safety adviser will assist at the time of the site inspection.

4. ASSESSMENTS

The risk associated with the use of the substance must be assessed by making a systematic review and asking:

- a) What quantities of substance are involved?
- b) What form is the substance in? ie liquid, dust, solid, vapour
- c) How can it harm someone? ie by inhalation, by skin contact, by absorption through the skin, by ingestion.
- d) Who could be exposed to the substance and for how long?
- e) Does the substance have to be used or can a non-hazardous substance be substituted?

In gathering this information reference may have to be made to the manufacturer's product data sheet **but** the data sheet **is not** a COSHH assessment.

4.1 Generic Assessments

In Section B there are a number of generic assessments (general assessments) which have been completed by the safety adviser. If the same substance is being used in the same way, then the assessment can be adopted. However, if the substance is being used in ways or conditions different to those detailed then a new assessment will be needed. Blank assessment forms have been included for this purpose in Section 'C'. The safety adviser will assist, when necessary at the time of the site visit.

5. WORKPLACE EXPOSURE LIMITS

Throughout this manual reference has been made to Workplace Exposure Limits (WEL). These are determined by the Health and Safety Executive and are updated annually in Guidance Note EH40. The safety adviser will assist you in obtaining this information. In addition suppliers product data sheets usually contains this information.

COSHH requires that where there is an exposure to a substance for which a workplace exposure standard has been assigned, the control of exposure shall be treated as adequate if;

- a) The WEL is not exceeded or,
- b) Where the WEL is exceeded, the employer identifies the reasons for the standard being exceeded and acts to remedy the situation as soon as reasonably practicable.

6. SAFETY PHRASE AND RISK PHRASE

A Safety Phrase is an abbreviated phrase such as

- S36: Wear suitable protective clothing
- S37: Wear suitable gloves
- S38: In case of insufficient ventilation, wear suitable respiratory equipment

A Risk Phrase is an abbreviated phrase such as :-

- R10: Flammable
- R11: Highly flammable
- R12: Extremely flammable
- R13: Extremely flammable liquefied gas

These abbreviated phrases are used on COSHH assessments and on Material Safety Data Sheets. The full list is attached at Section D.

7. CONTROL MEASURES

Under COSHH, employers have to ensure that the exposure of employees to hazardous substances is prevented or if this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled.

This may mean preventing exposure by:

- a) Removing the hazardous substance by changing the processes ie cold cut instead of hot cutting and so eliminate fume or
- b) Substitute with a safe or less hazardous substance.

Only where this is not reasonably practicable, should the following control measures be adopted.

- Totally enclosing the process.
- Local exhaust ventilation.
- Using Safe Systems of Work (including the use of P.P.E.).

BUT remember that COSHH limits the use of personal protective equipment (eg respirators, protective clothing etc) as the means of protection **only** when other control measure cannot adequately control exposure. **PPE should be used as a last resort.**

8. MAINTENANCE OF CONTROL MEASURES

All engineering control measures in use should receive a visual check at least every week. All local exhaust ventilation (LEV) plant should be thoroughly examined and tested by a competent person every fourteen months. Any defects should be corrected. Records of visual checks, thorough examination, tests and corrective action must be kept and be available for a period of at least 5 years following the inspection.

8.1 Respirators and other PPE

If respirators (other than disposable respirators) and other items of PPE are an essential part of a control measure, then employers should establish systems to thoroughly examine respirators to ensure they are being maintained in a clean and effective manner.

These examinations should be carried out by a person suitable knowledgeable to carry out the checks. The inspection period could vary from monthly (or even more frequently) up to 3 months, the period being determined by the employer, taking into consideration the type of respirator, nature of work and the substances being handled. Records should be kept and it is advisable these are kept for 5 years.

8.2 Face Fit Tests for Those Wearing Respirators

If respirators have been identified as an essential control measure, then the wearer should undergo a face fit test to ensure the type of respirator in use does 'fit' the wears face and will provide the necessary protection. If the user could be asked to use more than one type of respirator, they should be fit tested all types likely to be used.

On completion and assuming the person has passed (indicating the respirator shape and wearers face are compatible and the protection factor will be achieved) the person can wear that type of respirator, but only those types for which a successful fittest certificate has been issued. If the employer wishes to introduce new types of respirators then fit tests on the new respirators will be required. This applies to disposable respirators as well as half and full face masks.

If the respirator is provided for comfort reasons, but as a control measure, (ie because the user is happy to wear the respirator but it is not an essential part of the control measures to safeguard the user health and safety), then fit tests are not required but this fact must be clearly stated in the COSHH assessment.

9. EATING, DRINKING, SMOKING AND COSHH

One route in which a hazardous substance may enter the body is through ingestion. Deliberate ingestion is a rare occurrence but accidental ingestion is more common. This means the operative's hands/skin/clothing have become contaminated with the substance and they have failed to take adequate precautions ie washing, removing overalls etc before consuming food and drink. In this way the contamination is transferred to the food and ingested. In construction work, any contaminants in the ground, or in dust or powder form lying in the building could be ingested. Good personal hygiene is essential to remove this risk.

Similarly with smoking, contaminants are transferred to the mouth on the cigarette paper and ingested. Smoking has other problems in that airborne substances are drawn into the lungs through the cigarette. In passing through the cigarette their temperature is increased and the substance may change into more harmful substances. Therefore smoking should not be permitted whilst working with hazardous substances.

10. INFORMATION INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING

Under COSHH employers must ensure their employees who are required to work with a hazardous substance have the necessary information, instruction and training to carry out the work without risk to their health. In particular this information should tell them:

- a) The hazardous substances in the product

- b) The potential risk to their health
- c) The possible routes of entry into the body
- d) The precautions that must be taken

11. SITE MANAGERS ACTION

The Site manager's role is critical in informing the employees as detailed in above. The COSHH assessment sheets should be referred to. The site manager must also act at co-ordinator for the COSHH aspects of the various substances sub-contractors use on site and when applicable liaise with the principal contractor.

12. PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC AND OTHER CONTRACTORS

As well as having a duty to protect the health of employees, COSHH places a duty on employers to safeguard other people as well. In general, this will be achieved by physical separation of other people from the work area. However, consideration should be given to others when positioning exhausts from local extraction equipment.

On construction sites employees from different contractors often work in close proximity to each other. In assessing the risks associated with the use of a substance consideration must be given to other contractors to ensure:

- a) They are not exposed to hazardous substances.
- b) The work the differing contractors are doing is compatible.

If a principal contractor has been appointed they will probably want copies of the company's COSHH assessments so that they can evaluate the risk to other contractors.

13. HAZARDS FROM OTHER CONTRACTORS

If a contractor not under the company's control is using a product or is carrying out a task which may affect the company's employees, the site manager should contact the principal contractor and request the necessary COSHH information through the principal contractor.

14. SUB-CONTRACTORS TO THE COMPANY

If a sub contractor is contracted to carry out work on site, they should submit to the site manager a list of their COSHH substances being used on site and copies of their assessment sheets clearly showing:

- a) The hazards and risks associated with the substance and its use
- b) Precautions the company must take to protect their own employees, other contractors and members of the public if applicable.

The Site manager should check and file this information with the COSHH manual and the safety adviser will check the assessment at the time of his visit.

15. SECTION 'B' GENERIC ASSESSMENT SHEETS

COSHH Assessments - This section contains the COSHH assessments for the substances commonly used by the company. These assessments are generic and are typical of the substances used by the company. The site manager will check the assessments to ensure they are relevant to the site. If they are not relevant the site manager must amend the assessments. For substances not included in the generic assessment but in use on the site, the site manager must produce the COSHH assessment for that product using information provided by the supplier/manufacturer in the product health & safety data sheet. The safety adviser will assist the site manager if required.

16. SECTION 'C' BLANK ASSESSMENT PROFORMA

Section C contains and number of blank assessment proforma's for the site manager's use.

17. SECTION 'D' SAFETY AND RISK PHRASES

SAFETY PHRASES used in the classification, packaging, labelling and provision of information on dangerous substances:

- S1 : Keep locked up
- S2 : Keep out of reach of children
- S3 : Keep in a cool place
- S4 : Keep away from living quarters
- S5 : Keep contents under.....(appropriate liquid to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S6 : Keep under.....(inert gas to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S7 : Keep container tightly closed
- S8 : Keep container dry
- S9 : Keep container in a well ventilated place
- S12: Do not keep the container sealed
- S13: Keep away from food, drink and animal feedstuffs
- S14: Keep away from..... (incompatible material to be indicated by the manufacturer)
- S15: Keep away from heat
- S16: Keep away from sources of ignition - No Smoking!
- S17: Keep away from combustible material
- S18: Handle and open container with care
- S20: When using do not eat or drink
- S21: When using do not smoke
- S22: Do not breathe dust
- S23: Do not breathe gas/fumes/vapour/spray (appropriate wording to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S24: Avoid contact with the skin
- S25: Avoid contact with eyes
- S26: In case of contact with eyes, rinse immediately with plenty of water and seek medical advice
- S27: Take off immediately all contaminated clothing
- S28: After contact with skin, wash immediately with plenty of.....(to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S29: Do not empty into drains
- S30: Never add water to this product
- S33: Take precautionary measures against static discharges
- S34: Avoid shock and friction
- S35: This material and its container must be disposed of in a safe way
- S36: Wear suitable protective clothing
- S37: Wear suitable gloves
- S38: In case of insufficient ventilation, wear suitable respiratory equipment
- S39: Wear eye/face protection
- S40: To clean the floor and all objects contaminated by this material use (to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S41: In case of fire and/or explosion do not breath fumes

- S42: During fumigation /spraying wear suitable respiratory equipment (appropriate wording to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S43: In case of fire, use....(indicate in this space the precise type of fire fighting equipment. If water increases the risk, add "never use water")
- S44: If you feel unwell, seek medical advice (show the label where possible)
- S45: In case of accident or if you feel unwell, seek medical advice immediately (show the label where possible)
- S46: If swallowed, seek medical advice immediately and show the container or label
- S47: Keep at temperature not exceeding... °C (to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S48: Keep wetted with....(appropriate material to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S49: Keep only in the original container
- S50: Do not mix with... (to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S51: Use only in well ventilated areas
- S52: Not recommended for interior use on large surface areas
- S53: Avoid exposure - obtain special instructions before use
- S54: Obtain the consent of pollution control authorities before discharging to waste-water treatment plants
- S55: Treat using the best available techniques before discharge into drains or the aquatic environment
- S56: Do not discharge into drains or the environment, dispose to an authorised waste collection point
- S57: Use appropriate containment to avoid environmental contamination
- S58: To be disposed of as hazardous waste
- S59: Refer to manufacturer/supplier for information on recovery/recycling
- S60: This material and/or its container must be disposed of as hazardous waste
- S61: Avoid release to the environment. Refer to special instructions/ material safety data sheet
- S62: If swallowed, do not induce vomiting: seek medical advice immediately and show the container or label
- S63: In case of accident by inhalation: remove casualty to fresh air and keep at rest
- S64: If swallowed, rinse mouth with water (only if the person is conscious)

Combined safety phrases:

- S1/2: Keep locked up and out of reach of children
- S3/9: Keep in a cool, well ventilated place
- S3/7/9: Keep container tightly closed in a cool, well ventilated place
- S3/14: Keep in a cool place away from..... (incompatible materials to be indicated by the manufacturer)
- S3/9/14: Keep in a cool, well ventilated place away from. (incompatible materials to be indicated by the manufacturer)
- S3/9/49: Keep only in the original container in a cool, well ventilated place
- S3/9/14/49: Keep only in the original container in a cool, well ventilated place away from. (incompatible materials to be indicated by the manufacturer)
- S3/14: Keep in a cool place away from.....(incompatible materials to be indicated by the manufacturer)
- S7/8: Keep container tightly closed and dry
- S7/9: Keep container tightly closed and in a well ventilated place
- S7/47: Keep container tightly closed and at a temperature not exceeding.....deg.C (to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S20/21: When using do not eat, drink or smoke
- S24/25: Avoid contact with skin and eyes
- S27/28: Take off immediately all contaminated clothing. After contact with skin, wash immediately with plenty of(to be specified by the manufacturer)
- S29/35: Do not empty into drains. This material and its container must be disposed of in a safe way.
- S29/56: Do not empty into drains: dispose of this material and its container to hazardous or special waste collection point
- S36/37: Wear suitable protective clothing and gloves
- S36/37/39: Wear suitable protective clothing, gloves and eye/face protection
- S36/39: Wear suitable protective clothing and eye/face protection
- S37/39: Wear suitable gloves and eye/face protection
- S47/49: Keep only in the original container at a temperature not exceeding..... °C (to be specified by the manufacturer)

RISK PHRASES used in the classification, packaging, labelling and provision of information on dangerous substances:

- R1 : Explosive when dry
- R2 : Risk of explosion by shock, friction, fire or other source of ignition
- R3 : Extreme risk of explosion by shock, friction, fire or other source of ignition
- R4 : Forms very sensitive explosive metallic compounds
- R5 : Heating may cause an explosion
- R6 : Explosive with or without contact with air
- R7 : May cause fire
- R8 : Contact with combustible material may cause fire
- R9 : Explosive when mixed with combustible material
- R10: Flammable
- R11: Highly flammable
- R12: Extremely flammable
- R13: Extremely flammable liquefied gas
- R14: Reacts violently with water
- R15: Contact with water liberates highly flammable gases
- R16: Explosive when mixed with oxidising substances
- R17: Spontaneously flammable in air
- R18: In use, may form flammable/explosive vapour-air mixture
- R19: May form explosive peroxides
- R20: Harmful by inhalation
- R21: Harmful in contact with skin
- R22: Harmful if swallowed
- R23: Toxic by inhalation
- R24: Toxic in contact with skin
- R25: Toxic if swallowed
- R26: Very toxic by inhalation
- R27: Very toxic in contact with skin
- R28: Very toxic if swallowed
- R29: Contact with water liberates toxic gas
- R30: Can become highly flammable in use
- R31: Contact with acids liberates toxic gas
- R32: Contact with acids liberates very toxic gas
- R33: Danger of cumulative effects
- R34: Causes burns
- R35: Causes severe burns
- R36: Irritating to eyes
- R37: Irritating to respiratory system
- R38: Irritating to skin
- R39: Danger of very serious irreversible effects
- R40: Limited evidence of a carcinogenic effect
- R41: Risk of serious damage to eyes
- R42: May cause sensitisation by inhalation
- R43: May cause sensitisation by skin contact
- R44: Risk of explosion if heated under confinement
- R45: May cause cancer

- R46: may cause heritable genetic damage
- R47: May cause birth defects
- R48: Danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure
- R49: May cause cancer by inhalation
- R50: Very toxic to aquatic organisms
- R51: Toxic to aquatic organisms
- R52: Harmful to aquatic organisms
- R53: May cause long-term adverse effects in the aquatic environment
- R54: Toxic to flora
- R55: Toxic to fauna
- R56: Toxic to soil organisms
- R57: Toxic to bees
- R58: May cause long-term adverse effects in the environment
- R59: Dangerous to the ozone layer
- R60: May impair fertility
- R61: May cause harm to the unborn child
- R62: Possible risk of impaired fertility
- R63: Possible risk of harm to the unborn child
- R64: May cause harm to breast-fed babies
- R65 Harmful: may cause lung damage if swallowed
- R66 Repeated exposure may cause skin dryness or cracking
- R67 Vapours may cause drowsiness and dizziness
- R68 Possible risk of irreversible effects

17.1

Combination of risks:

- R14/15: Reacts violently with water liberating highly flammable gases
- R15/29: Contact with water liberates toxic, highly flammable gas
- R20/21: Harmful by inhalation and in contact with the skin
- R20/21/22: Harmful by inhalation, in contact with the skin and if swallowed
- R20/22: Harmful by inhalation and if swallowed
- R21/22: Harmful in contact with the skin and if swallowed
- R23/24: Toxic by inhalation and in contact with the skin
- R23/24/25: Toxic by inhalation, in contact with the skin and if swallowed
- R23/25: Toxic by inhalation and if swallowed
- R24/25: Toxic in contact with the skin and if swallowed
- R26/27: Very toxic by inhalation and in contact with the skin
- R26/27/28: Very toxic by inhalation, in contact with the skin and if swallowed
- R26/28: Very toxic by inhalation and if swallowed
- R27/28: Very toxic in contact with the skin and if swallowed
- R39/23 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation
- R39/23/24 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation and in contact with skin
- R39/23/24/25 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation and in contact with skin and if swallowed
- R39/23/25 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation and if swallowed

R39/24 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects in contact with skin
R39/24/25 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects in contact with skin and if swallowed
R39/25 Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects if swallowed
R39/26 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation
R39/26/27 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation and in contact with skin
R39/26/27/28 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation and in contact with skin and if swallowed
R39/26/28 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects through inhalation and if swallowed
R39/27 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects in contact with skin
R39/27/28 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects in contact with skin and if swallowed
R39/28 Very Toxic: danger of very serious irreversible effects if swallowed
R40/20 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects through inhalation
R40/20/21 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects through inhalation and in contact with skin
R40/20/21/22 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects through inhalation and in contact with skin and if swallowed
R40/20/22 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects through inhalation and if swallowed
R40/21 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects in contact with skin
R40/21/22 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects in contact with skin and if swallowed
R40/22 Harmful: possible risk of irreversible effects if swallowed
R36/37: Irritating to eyes and respiratory system
R36/37/38: Irritating to eyes, respiratory system and skin
R36/38: Irritating to eyes and skin
R37/38: Irritating to respiratory system and skin
R42/43: May cause sensitisation by inhalation and skin contact
R48/20: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation
R48/20/21: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation and in contact with the skin
R48/20/21/22: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation, in contact with the skin and if swallowed
R48/20/22: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation and if swallowed
R48/21: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure in contact with skin
R48/21/22: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure in contact with skin and if swallowed
R48/22: Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure if swallowed
R48/23: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation
R48/23/24: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation and in contact with the skin

R48/23/24/25: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation, in contact with the skin and if swallowed
R48/23/25: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation and if swallowed
R48/24: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure in contact with skin
R48/24/25: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure in contact with skin and if swallowed
R48/25: Toxic: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure if swallowed
R50/53: Very toxic to aquatic organisms, may cause long term adverse effects in the aquatic environment
R51/53: Toxic to aquatic organisms, may cause long term adverse effects in the aquatic environment
R52/53: Harmful to aquatic organisms, may cause long term adverse effects in the aquatic environment