1. **OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE**

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) is one of a number of safety standards forming East Ayrshire Leisure’s written arrangements in compliance with the general duties under the [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents)

Assessing risks associated with hazardous substances and ensuring adequate controls are in place are requirements under the [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2677/regulation/7/made)

This standard relates specifically to protecting the health of employees from contact with hazardous substances at work or any other persons who may be affected through the course of East Ayrshire Leisure’s operations or activities.

1. **RESPONSIBILITY**

Overall responsibility of this standard belongs to the Chief Officer and Development Managers. Operational responsibility belongs to Managers who must ensure that the COSHH risk assessment process is fully implemented and communicated to the workforce in areas under their control.

The Council’s Corporate Health and Safety Section will provide advice and guidance to Managers on the development of COSHH risk assessments and controlling any exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace.

Services will need to supplement this standard with written details of local arrangements in place, i.e. COSHH inventories of substances hazardous to health and completed COSHH risk assessments. Local arrangements are subject to audit.

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) standard has been reviewed to ensure the continued compliance with legal requirements under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and particular requirements under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended).

The aim of this standard is to provide guidance to managers and supervisors on how to ensure that any risks associated with substances hazardous to health are fully assessed and controlled.

Failure to properly assess substances and their harmful effects can lead to employees and other persons suffering from various health problems such as skin complaints or respiratory illness.

COSHH 2002 is the principal legislation dealing with hazardous substances, but other important regulations and codes of practice related to COSHH includes:

* [COSHH Approved Code of Practice L5](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l5.htm)
* [COSHH Essentials](https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/essentials/)
* [CLP Regulations](http://www.hse.gov.uk/chemical-classification/legal/clp-regulation.htm)
* [REACH Regulations](http://www.hse.gov.uk/reach/)
* [EH40 Workplace Exposure Limits](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pUbns/priced/eh40.pdf)

Using chemicals or other hazardous substances at work can put employees and other persons affected at risk. Managers must therefore ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place for the use of chemicals/ substances and that exposure is either prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, controlled.

1. **DEFINITION OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

## **2.1 Development Managers**

Development Managers will ensure that adequate resources and appropriate systems are in place within their Services in order to control any substances hazardous to health in the workplace, as far as reasonably practicable.

##

## **2.2 Co-ordinators and Supervisors**

Co-ordinators and supervisors should ensure that work activities have been properly risk assessed, with suitable and sufficient control measures put in place to reduce any identified risks to employees who are exposed to substances hazardous to health in the workplace.

Controls which managers/supervisors have a responsibility to ensure are in place include:

* Nominating and training individuals to carry out COSHH risk assessments.
* Keeping an updated inventory of all hazardous substances within the workplace.
* Putting in place control measures to minimise the risk of exposure to hazardous substances e.g. eliminate the use of a harmful product or substance for a safer alternative.
* Providing suitable training and instruction to employees about the risks of any hazardous substance in the workplace.
* Supervision of work activities to ensure that control measures are being used effectively.
* Providing suitable work equipment and ensuring that it remains in full working condition e.g. local exhaust ventilation (LEV).
* Providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as required.

##

## **2.3 Employees**

Employees have a duty to protect their own health and safety and that of others. In respect of any possible exposure to hazardous substances, employees have a responsibility for ensuring that they:

* Comply with any training and instruction given, including the information contained in any COSHH risk assessments provided.
* Wear any PPE and RPE which is provided for their health and safety.
* Immediately report any unsafe conditions to their manager/ supervisor.
* Comply with any health surveillance requirements arising from the COSHH assessments.
1. **CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH**

**3.1 Definitions**

**Substance:** Any natural or artificial substance in solid, liquid or gaseous vapour form, including mixtures of substances. This includes dusts, biological agents, asphyxiates, carcinogens\*, mutagens\* and teratogens\*

**Hazardous substance:** Substances which are classified as being very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive, irritant or have workplace exposure limits.

Hazardous substances used in the workplace may take many forms – liquids, gases, dusts, vapours, fibres mists and fumes including:

* + Substances used directly in work activities e.g. adhesives, paints, cleaning agents.
	+ Substances generated during work activities e.g. fumes from soldering and welding.
	+ Gas such as engine exhaust gases.
	+ Any kind of dust if its average concentration in the air exceeds the levels specified under COSHH e.g. 10mg/m3 of inhalable dust or 4mg/m3 of respirable dust.
	+ Biological agents such as bacteria, viruses and other micro-organisms where they are directly concerned with the workplace e.g. animal husbandry, landfill sites or healthcare, or if the exposure is incidental to the workplace e.g. exposure to bacteria from an air-conditioning system that is poorly maintained.
	+ Any other substance which creates a risk to health such as asphyxiates (i.e. gases such as argon and helium), pesticides, medicines, cosmetics or substances produced in chemical processes.

## **3.2 Health Effects**

Ill-effects from substances hazardous to health include:

* Eye or skin irritation or dermatitis as a result of skin contact
* Occupational asthma caused by an allergic or irritant reaction to substances used at work
* Losing consciousness as a result of being overcome by toxic fumes
* Cancer, which may appear long after the exposure to the causal chemical
* Infection from bacteria and other micro-organisms (biological agents)

***\*Carcinogens***: cause or promote the development of unwanted cells such as cancer.

***\*Mutagens:*** alter cell development and cause changes in future generations.

 **\*Teratogens:** may cause birth defects and foetal abnormalities

## **3.3 Exceptions Under the COSHH Regulations**

COSHH applies to virtually all substances hazardous to health, except:

* Asbestos and lead, which have their own regulations,
* Substances which are hazardous due only to their radioactive properties,
* Biological agents that are outside the employer’s control e.g. catching a cold or flu from a colleague.

## **3.4 Safety Data Sheets**

By law, suppliers of chemicals must provide an up to date **safety data sheet (SDS)**. Information from the safety data sheet and hazard warning signage on chemicals will indicate whether or not a COSHH assessment is required. Further information on warning symbols can be found in section 9.

**The safety data sheet will identify whether or not a substance will cause harm. This is called a chemical/hazard classification. Where the SDS advises no hazard classification, a COSHH assessment is not required.**

**Remember, a safety data sheet is not a COSHH risk assessment. Contact the Health and Safety Section if you are unsure whether a COSHH assessment is required.**

## **3.5 COSHH Register**

COSHH Registers should be kept up to date within each Section where hazardous substances are in use. The register should include the following information:

* A COSHH inventory, which lists the hazardous substances used in the workplace **NOTE:** COSHH inventories should be reviewed on an annual basis and emailed to the Health and Safety Helpdesk
* Up to date Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all products used, which are available from the supplier of the product
* Completed COSHH risk assessments

**Services should always consider whether they can reduce the total number of substances on the register, by removing and safely disposing of those which are no longer used or which may have exceeded their expiry date.**

## **3.6 New Substances**

COSHH assessments must be carried out for any new hazardous substance **before it is authorised for use.** New substance requests should be completed on the [COSHH Assessment Request Questionnaire](https://leisurenet/media/1336/coshh-assessment-request-questionnaire.xls) form and forwarded to the nominated person within the section or to the Health and Safety Helpdesk healthandsafety@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

# 4 COSHH RISK ASSESSMENT

A [COSHH risk assessment](https://leisurenet/media/1337/coshh-risk-assessment.docx) must be carried out for substances which have been identified as hazardous. It is important to remember that health hazards are not always limited to products labelled as ‘hazardous’. Health risks can also be produced by work processes, for example fumes from welding or soldering, mist from metalworking and dust from cutting silica or wood products.

## **4.1 Identify the Hazards**

In most services within East Ayrshire Leisure, the risks associated with tasks or activities are already well known as managers and employees will have knowledge and experience of the operational aspects of their workplace.

The first step to carrying out a COSHH assessment is to identify where there is potential for exposure to substances that may be hazardous to health.

The COSHH assessor should consult with employees who carry out specific work activities, as they have the experience and technical knowledge which can be applied to the assessment process i.e. how a substance is used, method of application etc.

Where available, always refer to the safety data sheet (SDS) for information about a particular substance. Remember, some substances, such as dust or fumes, arise from processes and will not have a safety data sheet.

## **4.2 Identify Who Might Be Harmed**

When carrying out COSHH assessments it must be clearly identified who might be harmed and how that harm could occur. For example, employees who are using oils may be at risk from dermatitis and other skin disorders. Simple control measures such as wearing protective clothing, using barrier creams and maintaining high standards of personal hygiene and cleanliness must be followed.

The assessor mustidentify all those people, including employees and non-employees who may be at risk, paying particular attention to those individuals or groups who may be more vulnerable e.g. young people, people with pre-existing health conditions etc.

Persons who may be harmed can include any, or all of the following:

* Skilled workers
* Trainees and new workers
* Young workers
* New or expectant mothers
* Workers with disabilities or health issues
* Lone workers
* Contractors
* Service users including pupils, day care and full-time residents
* Members of the public and visitors

**N.B:** Always ensure that persons/groups identified are potentially exposed to the task or activity. **Don’t overcomplicate the assessment** by including very remote chance exposure of other persons/groups.

There may be occasions where the risk assessment identifies circumstances in which occupational health surveillance for an employee or group of employees is required due to exposure to health hazards; for example dusts.

Where health risks have been identified during the risk assessment process, the responsible Manager should arrange health surveillance through Occupational Health Service.

## **4.3 Control of Exposure**

There are eight principles of good practice which should be applied in order to control any exposure to substances hazardous to health, as detailed in *Schedule 2a* of the COSHH Regulations.

1. ***Design and operate processes and activities to minimise emission, release and spread of substances hazardous to health.***

Look at each substance involved in the work process and find out in what way(s) they are harmful. This can be found from the information in the product Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

1. ***Take into account all relevant routes of exposure – inhalation, skin absorption, ingestion and injection when developing control measures****.*
* **Inhalation:** absorption through the lungs of airborne substances.
* **Exposure by skin contact:** touching,splashing, airborne contamination.
* **Exposure to the eyes:** Some vapours, gases and dusts are irritating to eyes. Caustic fluid splashes can damage eyesight permanently.
* **Exposure by swallowing:** transferring chemicals from hands to mouths by eating, smoking etc. without washing first.
* **Exposure by skin puncture**: risks from skin puncture such as needle stick injuries are rare, but can involve infections or very harmful substances.
1. ***Control exposure by measures that are proportionate to health risk.***

The COSHH Regulations require the controls of exposure to substances hazardous to health are proportionate to the level of risk. The risk control hierarchy is as follows:

* Eliminate the use of a harmful product or substance and use a safer one,
* Change the process to emit less of the substance,
* Enclose the process so that the product is not released,
* Extract emissions of the substance near the source e.g. local exhaust ventilation (LEV) or fume cupboard,
* Reduce the number of persons exposed,
* Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, coveralls and a respirator.
1. ***Choose the most effective and reliable control options, which minimise the escape and spread of substances hazardous to health.***
* Control equipment comes in many forms and includes:
* ventilation to extract dust, mists and fumes
* fume cupboards
* spray booths
* using water to reduce dusts
* systems for disinfecting cooling water
* Engineering controls such as:
* Natural ventilation
* Local Exhaust Ventilation
* Other effective control measures such as:
* Dilution
* Reducing volume
* Controlling access
* Segregation
* Permit to work
* Supervision
* Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) which is examined and where appropriate, tested at suitable intervals by a competent person.
1. ***Where adequate control of exposure cannot be achieved by other means, provide, in combination with other control measures, suitable personal protective equipment*.**
* Provision of Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
* RPE and PPE must be checked and maintained to ensure it continues to provide protection
* PPE must be suitable for the task and fit the wearer

The provision of RPE and PPE should be in addition to the measures to all of the eight steps and not the only control measure. Further information is available at [Personal Protective Equipment](https://leisurenet/media/1732/ppe-standard.docx)

1. ***Check and regularly review all elements of the control measures for their continued effectiveness.***

Competent Persons should be appointed to regularly check and maintain control measures to:

* Ensure that inventories are being maintained and are up to date
* Check that processes are not releasing uncontrolled contaminants
* Check that the control equipment continues to work correctly
* Where local exhaust ventilation (LEV) is used to control exposure, it is regularly checked with a thorough examination and test at least once every 14 months by a competent engineer
* Check that employees are following the approved method of working through appropriate supervision and inspection of the work process
1. ***Inform and train all employees on the hazards and risks from the substances with which they work and the use of control measures developed to minimise the risks.***

It is the responsibility of co-ordinators and supervisors to take steps to ensure that employees understand and make proper use of the control measures provided. Controls cannot be fully effective if employees are unaware of their purpose, how they are to be properly used, or the importance of reporting defects.

Employees must be provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision, which should include:

* The names of the substances with which they work or could be exposed to and the risks created from such exposure
* A suitable and sufficient COSHH Risk Assessment
* Precautions to be taken to protect themselves and others
* Results of any exposure monitoring and health surveillance to that individual
* Any emergency procedures that need to be followed
1. ***Ensure that that introduction of control measures does not increase the overall risk to health and safety.***

Control measures should be proportionate to the risk and should not result in exposure to other risks to the health and safety of employees or other persons.

# 5.  DUST

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, specifically require that employees are protected against any risk of exposure to hazardous substances. This legal requirement extends to protection against exposures to dusts, which are also classified as hazardous substances under the COSHH Regulations.

Unlike other occupational health hazards, dust tends not to be viewed as such an obvious health risk. This may be partly due to the fact that the particles which cause the most damage are often invisible to the naked eye and the health effects from exposure can develop slowly, so symptoms may not appear until irreversible changes have already taken place, sometimes many years after exposure. Exposure to dusts can cause significant damage to health, depending on the composition of the dust particles and the types and degree of exposure.

For further information on dust go to [Dust Exposure Standard](http://eacintranet/Services/HealthandSafety/MasterSafetyFileStandardReviews/Dust-and-Fumes.pdf)

# 6. INSPECTIONS AND MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Inspection and maintenance regimes must be in place to ensure that any plant and equipment used to reduce risks of exposure to hazardous substances i.e. Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV), on-tool dust extraction systems and fume cupboards, are inspected and maintained in good working order.

All PPE and RPE used must be suitably stored, checked on a daily basis by the wearer, and replaced if found to be defective. RPE (other than disposable masks) must be thoroughly examined at suitable intervals by a competent person in line with the manufacturer’s guidance. Thorough examination periods will be determined by the frequency of use but in any case should not exceed three months.

Managers must keep up to date records of all LEV’s and RPE which requires to be inspected and maintained in compliance with COSHH Regulations. Details of any inspections, and any repairs carried out as a result of those inspections, must be retained for a minimum period of 5 years.

Periodic unannounced inspections should be introduced by managers to ensure that safe systems of work are being followed and that any PPE and RPE required is being worn and stored correctly.

# 7. INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING

Managers must ensure that employees are provided with suitable information, instruction and training of the risks they face in the workplace and the control measures introduced to protect their health, safety and welfare.

Any information, training and instruction given should be provided in a manner proportionate to the risks and duration of exposure identified in the COSHH risk assessment and should contain the following:

* Details of the substances used and the risks they present to health
* Details of any occupational exposure limits associated with the substance
* Details of the control measures/ precautions introduced to remove or reduce the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable
* Information on the PPE and/ or RPE to be worn
* The purpose of health surveillance and the duty of employees to follow health surveillance procedures and attend appointments
* Details for dealing with incidents and emergencies i.e. first aid, spillage

Employees should be provided with the relevant **COSHH Summary Sheet** applicable to any hazardous substances used in the workplace.

Managers must ensure that the information, instruction and training provided is understood by the employee. If any employee has difficulties in understanding the information provided, for example language or reading difficulties, suitable alternative methods must be introduced.

# 8. CLP REGULATIONS and REACH REGULATIONS

In addition to COSHH Regulations 2002, there are some other important regulations which apply to the manufacture and supply of chemical substances.

Substances or mixtures of substances classified as dangerous to health are covered by the **Chemical Labelling Packaging (CLP) Regulations**. This requires that any substance or mixture of substances being traded in the EU is classified, labelled and packaged appropriately.

Under the CLP Regulations, to be packaged appropriately the substance must:

* Identify the hazards of the chemical; this is known as ‘classification’
* Give information about the hazards to their customers. Suppliers usually provide this information on the package itself i.e. the label
* Package the chemical safely

**Regulation, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)** is a European Union regulation which came into force on 1 June 2007, replacing a number of European directives and Regulations within a single system.

REACH will operate alongside COSHH and is designed to provide better information on the hazards of chemicals, how to use them safely and how this information is passed down the supply chain by chemical manufacturers and importers through improved Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

# 9. HAZARD SYMBOLS

International symbols replaced European symbols in 2009, through the CLP Regulations. Some of them are similar to the European symbols but there are no words describing the hazard. The user has to read the hazard statement on the packaging and the Safety Data Sheet.

 **New International Symbols (red diamond with black pictogram, on clear background*)***

2...

******

1..

7...

8...

9...

6...

5...

4...

3...

* 1. Dangerous to the environment
* 2. Toxic
* 3. Gas under pressure
* 4. Corrosive
* 5. Explosive
* 6. Flammable
* 7. Caution - used for less serious health hazards like skin irritation
* 8. Oxidising
* 9. Longer term health hazards such as carcinogenicity and respiratory sensitisation.

 N.B: The harmful symbol has now been replaced by the exclamation pictogram.



# 10. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SURVEILLANCE

Managers should contact Occupational Health where it has been identified from the COSHH risk assessment that there may be a need for health surveillance, due to a potential health risk related to the use of or emissions from a hazardous substance in the workplace.

Health surveillance records will be produced and held by Occupational Health with copies sent to the Manager and EAC Human Resources. Exposure monitoring records should be kept for up to 40 years.

Managers must ensure that up to date records containing the following information are held, reviewed and maintained for all employees required to participate in Health Surveillance:

* Employee name
* Job title (location)
* Health surveillance required e.g. Lung Function Test, dermatitis
* Frequency and type of surveillance required e.g. annual questionnaire, 3 yearly consultation with Occupational Health Specialist etc.

Good communication between managers and Occupational Health is essential to ensure that health surveillance remains effective. Managers must therefore notify Occupational Health of any new employees who require health surveillance and also where any employee leaves the service, as this will ensure that records are kept up to date.

Occupational Health will collect, hold and maintain collective data for the purposes of determining the effectiveness of COSHH control measures. The Occupational Health service will provide EAC Health and Safety Manager with collective anonymised data for this purpose on an annual basis.

# 11. PROHIBITIONS

No hazardous substance should be purchased, accepted or used unless a valid and current Safety Data Sheet (SDS) has been obtained and a corresponding COSHH Risk Assessment has been carried out.

No person should be exposed to the substance and/ or its emissions without having an understanding of the hazards and subsequent control measures required. **This information should be should be communicated to employees through the COSHH Risk Assessment.**

Substances should only be stored in marked and suitable containers and/ or areas. **Under no circumstances should substances be decanted into unmarked and/or unsuitable containers.**

Substances should never be issued from stores to employees unless they have a legitimate reason for their use. No substance should be released to non-Trust personnel without prior authority from the Head of Service.

**12. FURTHER INFORMATION**

**For further information contact:**

Health and Safety Working Group, East Ayrshire Leisure

Telephone: 01563 554057

E Mail: EALHealthandSafety@eastayrshireleisure.com

Intranet: [Health & Safety](https://leisurenet/admin-docs/health-safety/)

Health and Safety Section, East Ayrshire Council

Tel: 01563 554825

E Mail: healthandsafety@east-ayrshire.gov.uk

EAC Intranet[Health and Safety](http://eacintranet/Services/HealthandSafety/HealthandSafety.aspx)

Further sources of information about the requirements of COSHH are available on the HSE website, including the following useful documents:

***Working with Substances Hazardous to Health:***

[*http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg136.pdf*](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg136.pdf)

***COSHH Essentials publications*:**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/index.htm>

***Understanding Health Surveillance at Work:***

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/health-surveillance/index.htm>

***COSHH essentials for welding, hot work and allied processes:***

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/wl0.pdf>

**COSHH essentials in brick and tile making:**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/bk0.pdf>

**COSHH essentials in construction:**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/cn6.pdf>

**EH40/2005 Workplace exposure limits:**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/eh40.pdf>

**Examples of COSHH Risk Assessments:**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/riskassess/index.htm>

**APPENDIX 1: COSHH RISK ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SUBSTANCE NAME:** |  | **MANUF/SUPPLIER:** |  |
| **METHOD OF USE:** |  | **AREA OF EXPOSURE:** |  |
| **PERSONS AT RISK:** |  | **VOLUME USED:** |  |
| **WORK LOCATION:** |  | **EXPOSURE TIME:** | Choose an item. |
| \\cnas1\users\homes\EadeE\DESKTOP\Desktop\toxic.gif | **Acute Toxicity/ Harmful** | irritant | **Harmful/ Irritant** | flammable | **Flammable** |
|  |[ ]   |[ ]   |[ ]
| human-health | **Serious health hazard** | corrosive | **Corrosive** | explosive | **Explosive** |
|  |[ ]   |[ ]   |[ ]
| oxidizing | **Oxidising** | environmental | **Environmental** | gas-bottles | **Gas under pressure** |
|  |[ ]   |[ ]   |[ ]
| **TYPE:** | **Gas** | **Vapour** | **Mist** | **Dust** | **Liquid** | **Solid** | **Fumes** |
|  |[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
| **EXPOSURE:** | **Inhalation** | **Absorbtion** | **Injection** | **Ingestion** |
|  |[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
| **CONTROL MEASURES:** |
| **Change Product**  | **Dilute** | **Reduce Volume** | **Increase Ventilation** | **Local Exhaust Ventilation** | **Damp down** | **Segregate** | **Control Access**  |
|[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
| **Permit to work** | **Supervision** | **Monitor Exposure** | **Health Surveillance** | **Instruction** | **Tool Box Talk** | **Training** | **Other** |
|[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
| **IF OTHER, PLEASE SPECIFY:** |
| **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE):** |
| **Dust Mask** | **Respirator** | **Visor** | **Goggles** | **Gloves** | **Overalls** | **Footwear** | **Other** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
| **RISK RATING FOLLOWING CONTROL MEASURES** |
| **Low**[ ]  | **Medium**[ ]  | **High**[ ]  |
| **HAS A SAFER ALTERNATIVE BEEN CONSIDERED? YES** [ ]  **NO** [ ]  **IF NO, PLEASE ADVISE WHY:** |
|  |

# APPENDIX 2: COSHH RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE NOTES

A COSHH risk assessment focusses on the hazards and risks arising from hazardous substances used in the workplace, which have the potential to cause harm. Managers are responsible for ensuring that a suitable and sufficient COSHH risk assessment is carried out for all harmful substances, which could affect the health and safety of employees, service users, pupils, volunteers, new and expectant mothers and members of the public. Risks to the environment should also be assessed. Significant risks must be identified, evaluated, and suitable control measures implemented to reduce the risk(s) as far as is reasonably practicable.

The material safety data sheet (SDS) will identify whether a substance can cause you harm; this is called a chemical/hazard classification. Where the SDS advises no hazard classification, a COSHH assessment is **not required.**

Health hazards are not limited to substances labelled **‘hazardous’**. Some harmful substances can be produced by the work process used i.e. wood dust from sanding or silica dust from tile cutting.

**Training**

All employees who are carrying out COSHH risk assessments must be appropriately trained on the COSHH risk assessment process.

**Method of use**

Identify how you intend to use the substance/process. For example; ***brushing, burning, dissolving, dosing, excavating, grinding, cutting, drilling, gun applying, handling/storing, line marking, mixing, mopping, pouring, pressure washing, sanding, shovelling, soldering, spraying.***

**Area of exposure**

Identify the area(s) where the substance will be used. ***For example: inside, outside or in an enclosed or confined space.***

**Exposure time**

Select the approximate time one person will use the substance on any one day.

**Work location**

Identify the location where the task is being undertaken. ***For example: workshop, on-site, tenants home.***

**Person(s) at risk**

Identify the people who could be exposed to the substance process. **For example: employees, contractors, pupils, members of the public, new and expectant mothers.**

**Volume Used**

Identify approximate how much of the substance/chemical will be used in one day/shift.

**Hazard classification**

Select the hazard symbols which are highlighted within the hazard identification section of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

**Type**

Select the physical state of the substance. For example: ***liquid, gas, vapour, dust, mist and solid***

**Exposure**

Select how people will be exposed to the harmful substance. Think about the route into the body. For example: ***breathing in gases, fumes, contact with the skin, swallowing, contact with eyes and skin puncture.***

**Control measures**

Once you have carried out the risk assessment and identified which harmful substances are present, you must put in place adequate control measures to reduce exposure. Change(change form of product), Dilute (reduce concentration), Reduce Volume (reduce amount used), Increase Ventilation, Local Exhaust Ventilation), Segregate (barrier working area), Damp Down (use water to reduce dust), Control Access (control Access to area), Permit to Work, Supervision, Monitor (monitor Exposure, Health surveillance, Instruction (written instruction), Tool Box Talk, or Training (specific training). **Remember, engineering controls must take precedence e.g. using a LEV system to remove harmful fumes, with PPE being the last resort.**

**Personal Protective Equipment**

Select the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which must be worn when using the substance. Mandatory PPE is identified within the SDS. Provide a brief description of the type and standard of PPE.

**Risk rating following control measures**

Once the controls have been assessed, the risk rating can be calculated based on thelevel of **harm** the substance poses and the **likelihood** of the substance causing you harm, using the risk matrix table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **HOW TO CALCULATE THE RISK RATING:****Multiply the LIKELIHOOD by the SEVERITY e.g. *Possible(3) X Significant(3)******= Risk Rating of (9)*** | **Critical / Fatal (5)** | **Severe (4)** | **Significant (3)** | **Marginal (2)** | **Negligible (1)** | **Severity Index** |
| **Likelihood Index** | **Highly Probable (5)** | **25** | **20** | **15** |  **10**  | **5** |
| **Probable (4)** | **20** | **16** | **12** | **8** | **4** |
| **Possible (3)** | **15** | **12** | **9** | **6** | **3** |
| **Unlikely (2)** | **10** | **8** | **6** | **4** | **2** |
| **Very Unlikely (1)** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RISK RATING** | **LEVEL OF ACTION REQUIRED** |
| LOW RISK | No action required but will require to be monitored and ensure that the prescribed controls are being used. |
| MEDIUM RISK | Steps are required to introduce further controls to reduce the risk. Set timescales require to be set to implement the controls. Once the additional controls have been added a review of the assessment may be required. |
| HIGH RISK | This substance may not be used until controls have been introduced to reduce the risk to low/medium risk. Considerable resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. |

**Has a safer alternative been considered?**

For high and medium risk substances, the elimination or substitution of this material must be considered.

* Do you really need to use this particular substance, or is a safer alternative available?
* Can you change the process to eliminate its use or avoid producing it? If this is not possible, you **must** put in place adequate control measures to reduce the risk
* Enclose the process so that the product is not released
* Extract emissions of the substance near the source e.g. local exhaust ventilation (LEV) or fume cupboard

**Health surveillance**

Managers should contact Occupational Health where it has been identified from the COSHH risk assessment that there may be a need for health surveillance, due to a potential health risk related to the use of or emissions from a hazardous substance in the workplace. If unsure, please contact Health and Safety Section.

**First aid**

Add in the details of the first aid measures to be taken in the event of the person being exposed. Information will be detailed within the safety data sheet.

**Fire**

Add in the details of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire. Information will be detailed within the safety data sheet.

**Spillage**

Add in the details of the procedures to follow in the event of an accidental release to the environment and spill clean-up methods. Information will be detailed within the safety data sheet.

**Storage/disposal**

Add in the details of storage and usage precautions. Information will be detailed within the safety data sheet.

# APPENDIX 3: COSHH ASSESSMENT REQUEST QUESTIONNAIRE

