

<b>Health and Safety Executive</b>		<b>Operational Circular</b>	
<b>Field Operations Directorate</b>		<b>OC 523/5</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	28/05/2009	<b>Open Government Status</b>	Fully Open
<b>Version No &amp; Date</b>	28/05/1999	<b>Author Unit/Section</b>	Food and Entertainment Sector

To  
 AFQ Inspectors (Bands 0-4)  
 RSG/SSG Specialist Inspectors (Occ Hyg) (Bands 0-3)  
 RSG/SSG Medical Inspectors

**FLOUR DUST IN BAKERIES: NEW GUIDANCE AND TRAINING PACKAGE**

This OC informs inspectors of new guidance on flour dust in bakeries and the availability of a video training package.

**BACKGROUND**

1 The Health and Safety in Bakeries Liaison Committee, which consists of representatives from all the relevant trade associations and unions together with HSE, published guidance in 1991 entitled *Guidelines to bakeries on the implementation of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988*, on how COSHH would apply to the control of dusts in bakeries. The guidance indicated that flour is not just an inert dust and that bakeries should detect all sources of flour dust exposure and take all reasonable steps to prevent or minimise it entering the atmosphere of the workroom. This guidance was supplemented in 1993 with *Guidance on practical measures to control dust in bakeries*, which gave further details of the likely levels of dust exposure at the main bakery tasks and of relevant control measures. Both publications are in file 523 and are referred to in OCs 523/1 and 523/3 which explain their application.

**NEW GUIDANCE AND TRAINING PACKAGE**

2 The previous guidance has now been updated in the new publication *Guidance on dust control and health surveillance in bakeries*. This continues the industry agreement that exposure to flour dust must be reduced to below 10mg/m<sup>3</sup> as far as reasonably practicable. The new guidance gives more comprehensive information on improving working practices to prevent dust becoming airborne. Health surveillance is covered in more detail and the guidance includes initial and ongoing health surveillance questionnaires for employers to use. There is also additional information on exposure levels for specific tasks such as brush cleaning, sieving and disposal of empty flour bags which were not covered in the existing guidance.

3 In addition the industry has prepared an interactive training package entitled *Breathe Easy* which includes a copy of the guidance, training notes and a video illustrating the control measures specified in the guidance.

4 Copies of the training package including the guidance have been issued to office video libraries. The guidance booklet has also been issued to file 523.

Date first issued: 28 May 1999

(220/FOD/1026/1999)

Disc ref: J:\Editors\intranet\ocfiles\253\_5.lwp

