

SR1

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.

Disinfectants 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.

Cleaning and disinfection using a low-pressure washer

Control approach S

Harm via skin or eye contact

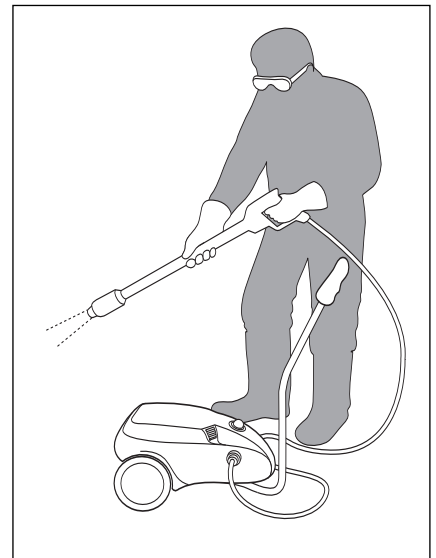
Access and premises

- ✓ Set up barriers and post warning signs.
- ✓ Keep people away while you are using a pressure washer.
- ✓ Provide good washing facilities.

Equipment

- ✓ Designate a segregated area for pressure washing, or do the job outdoors.
- ✓ Provide suitable personal protective equipment (PPE).
- ✓ Remove heavy dirt deposits first.
- ✓ Ensure that nearby electrical fittings are suitably waterproofed.

Caution: Don't store more than 50 litres of flammable liquid indoors. Use a flammables store.



Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Follow the instructions on product labels.
- ✓ Ask your supplier to help you choose the right PPE.
- ✓ Respiratory protection equipment (RPE) may be needed. Seek advice from your RPE supplier. Make sure you fit the correct cartridge before starting work.
- ✓ Make sure you know how to check that RPE fits correctly.
- ✓ 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 waterproof, slip-resistant boots and protective goggles.
- ✓ For pressure washing overhead, you may need a waterproof suit with head and face protection.
- ✓ 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.

Procedures

- ✓ Store products containing chemicals securely in a cool, dry, dark place, capable of keeping in spills. Don't store far more than you need.
- ✓ Ensure that workers follow instructions for use by reading the label, and make up solutions for immediate use only.

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- ✓ Keep chemicals off skin. Workers should wash off splashes and avoid contact with surfaces until they are dry.
 - ✓ Reduce cross contamination by washing out equipment after use.
Caution: Warn workers never to direct the water jet at their skin or another person.

Special Care

- ✓ Contact with many chemicals and wet-work can lead to dermatitis. Some chemicals can also damage the eyes.
- ✓ Some products may cause asthma.
- ✓ Avoid products that contain hydrofluoric acid.
- ✓ Try to avoid disinfectants that contain formaldehyde or glutaraldehyde. You may need to provide respiratory protection.
- ✓ Seek advice if products contain enzymes.

Maintenance, examination and testing

- ✓ Follow instructions in maintenance manuals - keep equipment in effective and efficient working order.

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

- Never direct the water jet at yourself or other people.
- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage.
- 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.