

SR11

COSHH Essentials for
service and retail

Hairdressing

Personal protective equipment (PPE) / general ventilation

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) require employers to ensure that exposure is prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled. This guidance gives practical advice on how this can be achieved by applying the principles of good practice for the control of exposure to substances hazardous to health, as required by COSHH.

It is aimed at people whose responsibilities include the management of substances hazardous to health at work (eg occupational health specialists, anyone undertaking COSHH assessments, and supervisors). It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives. It will help you carry out COSHH assessments, review existing assessments, deliver training, and supervise activities involving substances hazardous to health.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, 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.

See Essential information near the end of the sheet.

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good control practice when carrying out wet work and for the safe use of chemicals for hairdressing. It covers the key points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level. This is achieved by following good control practice, ie follow all the points described in this sheet or use equally effective measures.

Hazards

- ✓ Skin contact with some products may cause dermatitis.
- ✓ Prolonged contact with water (wet work) can lead to dermatitis.
- ✓ Some chemicals can also damage the eyes.
- ✓ Some hair dyes can also cause irritant or allergic contact dermatitis.
- ✓ Some dusty ingredients, eg persulphates and henna, may cause asthma.
- ✓ Some hairspray products may aggravate existing asthma.
- ✓ Barbicides contain chemicals that can irritate the skin and eyes.

Equipment and procedures

- ✓ Keep the workplace well ventilated and ensure a through draught.
- ✓ If possible, avoid dusty products – buy granules, pastes or solutions.
- ✓ Store products safely in a cool, dry, dark, ventilated space, in a way capable of containing any spills. Only store the amount you need.
- ✓ Read the instructions on labels carefully – follow the instructions for use.
- ✓ Make up only as much solution as you will need for immediate use.
- ✓ Dispose of used products safely.
- ✓ Buy liquid products in easy-pour containers that will minimise risk of spillages.
- ✓ Reduce skin contact – workers should wash off any splashes immediately.
- ✓ Put caps back on containers immediately after use and wipe the outside clean.

Liquids

- ✓ Add concentrate to diluting liquid – never the other way round, unless the instructions say so.

Powders

- ✓ Make a thin paste with a small amount of diluting liquid, then dilute as for liquids.

Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

- ✓ RPE is not normally needed.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Provide and ensure that workers use protective gloves. Single-use nitrile gloves are acceptable.
- ✓ If single-use gloves are selected then dispose of them safely every time you take them off.
- ✓ Eye protection should be available if mixing chemicals.
- ✓ Provide waterproof, slip-resistant footwear.
- ✓ Consult workers to ensure PPE will be suitable for them.
- ✓ Ensure that all items of PPE are compatible.
- ✓ Make suitable arrangements for maintenance, storage and replacement of PPE.

Personal decontamination and skin care

- ✓ Keep chemicals off your skin – wash off any splashes immediately.
- ✓ Provide warm water, mild skin cleansers, and soft paper or fabric towels for drying. Avoid abrasive cleansers.
- ✓ Provide pre-work skin creams, which make it easier to wash contaminants from the skin.
- ✓ Moisturisers should then be used after hand washing.
- ✓ Provide after-work creams to replenish skin oils.

Caution: These creams are not a substitute for gloves and do not provide a full barrier.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- ✓ Clean work equipment and the work area daily. Clean other equipment and the workroom regularly – at least once a week.
- ✓ Deal with spills immediately – absorb liquid spills with granules and decontaminate the area (ask your product supplier or follow the Safety Data Sheet instructions).
- ✓ Dispose of hazardous waste safely in a labelled, lidded bin.

Health surveillance

- ✓ Employers are required to carry out health surveillance if workers use a product labelled ‘May cause sensitisation by skin contact’ or ‘May cause sensitisation by inhalation’, and in such cases should consult an occupational health professional.
- ✓ Provide health surveillance for asthma where there is a reasonable likelihood that this may occur in your workplace. See sheet G402 in Essential information.
- ✓ Provide health surveillance for dermatitis where there is a reasonable likelihood that this may occur in your workplace. See sheet G403 in Essential information.
- ✓ Consult an occupational health professional on the level of health surveillance required.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Tell workers about the hazards associated with their work and how to recognise early signs of asthma and dermatitis.
- ✓ Provide supervision – ensure that safe work procedures are followed.
- ✓ Involve managers and supervisors in health and safety training.

- ✓ Provide workers with training on:
- working safely with hazardous substances;
 - when and how to use controls;
 - what to do if something goes wrong.

Essential information

S100 – General advice on chemicals causing harm via skin or eye contact.

S101 – Selecting protective gloves

S102 – Selecting personal protective equipment

G402 – Health surveillance for occupational asthma

G403 – Health surveillance for occupational dermatitis

Further information

HSE advice on hairdressing

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/faq/hairdressing.htm>

Hair and Beauty Industry Authority (HABIA) www.habia.org/

The National Hairdressers Federation www.nhf.biz/

Control of substances hazardous to health: The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L5 (sixth edition) HSE 2013.
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l5.htm>

A guide to the health and safety of salon hair products, available from hair product manufacturers or the Hair & Beauty Suppliers Association www.thehbsa.co.uk/

Managing risks from skin exposure at work HSG262 (second edition), HSE Books 2015. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg262.htm>

Preventing contact dermatitis and urticaria at work INDG233(rev2), HSE Books 2015. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg233.htm>

Posters on protective gloves and skin care
www.hse.gov.uk/skin/information.htm

Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register www.oshcr.org/

You can find the full COSHH Essentials series at
www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm

For information about health and safety, visit
<https://books.hse.gov.uk> or <http://www.hse.gov.uk>

You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

To report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, email:
commissioning@tso.co.uk

Employee checklist

- Do you understand the health hazards associated with your work?
- Are you sure about safe working procedures?
- Do you know how to use controls?
- Use, maintain and store your PPE in accordance with instructions.
- Wash hands before eating and drinking, after smoking and using the lavatory, and after work.
- Never clean your hands with concentrated cleaning products or solvents.
- Check your skin regularly for dryness or soreness – make sure you know the procedure on reporting if such symptoms occur. Early intervention means it will be less likely that you develop permanent symptoms.
- Use skin creams provided as instructed.
- Co-operate with health surveillance.