

OCE21

Offshore COSHH essentials



This information will help offshore dutyholders (owners, operators and contractors) to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), as amended, to protect workers' health.

This guidance consolidates good control practice and reinforces existing knowledge with additional information.

It will help you carry out COSHH assessments, review existing assessments, deliver training and in supervising activities involving substances hazardous to health.

It is aimed at staff whose responsibilities include the management of substances hazardous to health on offshore installations (eg occupational health specialists, COSHH assessors, supervisors etc). It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives.

Following this guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow this 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.

Also see essential information on the back of the sheet.

Laundry

Control approach 1 General ventilation

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice for laundering contaminated work clothing.

It covers the key points you need to follow to help reduce exposure to an acceptable level, as part of your COSHH assessment.



Hazards

- ✓ A wide range of hazardous contaminants may be present on clothing. Bags containing such items should be labelled accordingly.
- ✓ Heavy-duty cleaning products may cause skin irritation, burns or serious eye damage.
- ✓ Frequent hand contact with water can cause dermatitis.

Storage

- ✓ Provide a store with sufficient space, well organised, well lit and well ventilated.
- ✓ Clearly display the labels on chemical containers.
- ✓ Minimise the amount of product stored.
- ✓ Provide spill containment and spill clean-up kits.

Equipment and procedures

Substitution

- ✓ Use less harmful products when available.
- ✓ Use liquid detergent formulations rather than powder.
- ✓ Check work clothing for objects that might damage machinery, eg tools.

Control procedures

- ✓ Ensure a good standard of general ventilation.
- ✓ Launder contaminated work clothing separate from domestic items.
- ✓ Identify:
 - items needing a dedicated wash; and
 - items needing a double wash cycle.
- ✓ Provide measured-volume dispensers to avoid pouring detergents/chemicals
- ✓ Clear out the tumble drier dust filters at the beginning, middle and end of each shift.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see OCM3

- ✓ Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is not normally needed.

Other protective equipment

- ✓ Ensure workers wear protective gloves. Single-use gloves are acceptable. If you must use latex gloves, select low-protein powder-free gloves.

Maintenance, examination and testing

Checking and maintenance

- ✓ Check for signs of damage at the start of every shift.
- ✓ Follow manufacturers' instructions for maintaining washing machines.

Records

- ✓ Keep records of all examinations and tests for at least five years.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- ✓ Clean the laundry at least once a week.
- ✓ Clear up spills immediately. Use protective gloves.

Personal decontamination and skin care

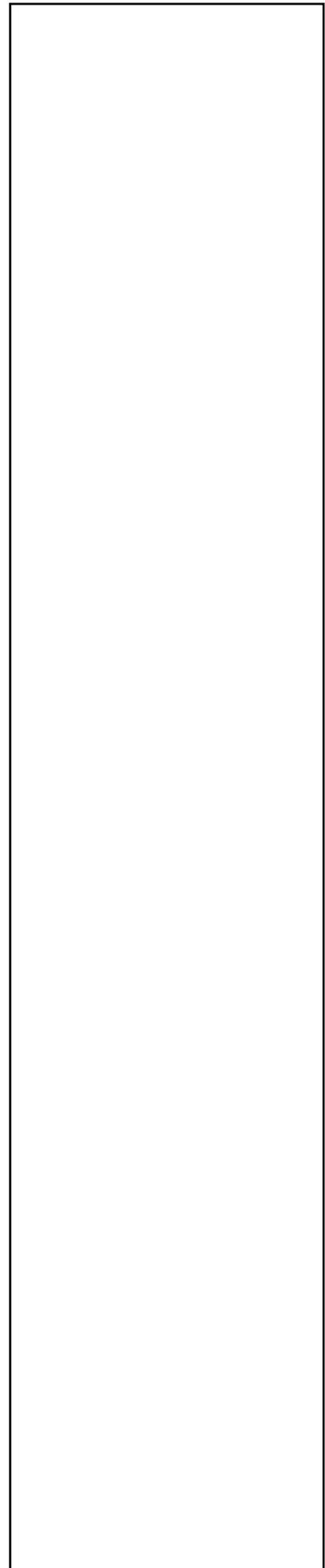
- ✓ Provide warm water, mild skin cleansers, nailbrushes, and soft paper, fabric towels or hot air for drying. Avoid abrasive cleansers.
- ✓ Provide pre-work skin creams, which will make it easier to wash dirt from the skin, and after-work creams to replace skin oils.

Health surveillance

- ✓ Conduct low-level health surveillance for dermatitis involving skin checks by suitably trained responsible person.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Provide supervision – ensure that safe work procedures are followed.
- ✓ Tell workers, including maintenance workers, what the hazards and risks are.
- ✓ Explain the early signs of dermatitis.
- ✓ Training includes toolbox talks on:
 - how to use equipment properly;
 - how to clean up spills correctly; and
 - what to do if something goes wrong.
- ✓ Involve managers and supervisors in health and safety training.



Essential information

OCE0 *Advice for managers*

OCM3 *Personal protective equipment (PPE)*

Employee checklist

- Is the equipment in good condition and working properly?
- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage before every job.
- Clean up leaks and spills immediately.
- Do you have a spill clean-up kit handy?
- If you find any problem, get it fixed. Don't just carry on working.
- Discard single-use gloves every time you take them off.
- Wash hands before eating, drinking or using the lavatory.

Other hazards

- Noise
- Thermal – risk of overheating.
- Musculoskeletal disorders
manual handling awkward
heavy items in restricted
places
- Fire
- Sharps
- Wet work
- Slips and trips

Further information

Tumble dryer fires in laundry rooms Information sheet
3/2009 HSE

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

This guidance was developed by representatives from the UK offshore oil and gas industry and trade unions, with HSE.