

S101

COSHH essentials: Harm via skin or eye contact



This information will help employers comply with the **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)**, as amended, to control exposure to chemicals and protect workers' health.

It is also useful for trade union safety representatives.

This sheet covers protective gloves.

It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Selecting protective gloves

Control approach S Supplementary advice

Selection of chemical-protective gloves

- ✓ You may need expert advice from your PPE supplier or manufacturer, or from a health and safety professional.
- ✓ Incorrect selection or misuse of protective gloves can lead to skin disease including dermatitis, burns or serious ill health, and waste your money.
- ✓ Involve your workers in selecting protective gloves.
- ✓ Get up-to-date safety data sheets for all chemical products.
- ✓ Fill in the selection table on page three and show it, with safety data sheets, to your PPE supplier.
- ✓ Check if the wearer has any skin condition that would affect their wearing of protective gloves? If so, consult an occupational health professional - see 'Useful links'.
- ✓ Select gloves that are CE marked as 'complex (category III) PPE', EN374
- ✓ Chemicals can 'wick' through coated gloves with a knitted liner and cuffs onto exposed skin within seconds.
- ✓ If you must select latex gloves, then use only 'low protein, powder free' gloves.
- ✓ Wet-work (hand immersion, particularly multiple short-term immersions using soap or detergent) is also associated with dermatitis.

Maintenance

- ✓ Gloves cannot be 'maintained'. They nearly always become contaminated inside the second time they are put on. Contamination works through the glove even while it is not being worn. Single use (disposable) gloves might offer better protection.
- ✓ No glove is tested to give more than 8 hours' protection against chemical permeation. Wear and tear, stretching and abrasion are not included in any testing.
- ✓ Throw away 'single use' gloves when they are taken off.
- ✓ Throw away chemical-protective gloves at the end of the shift. They may look clean and undamaged inside, but they won't be.

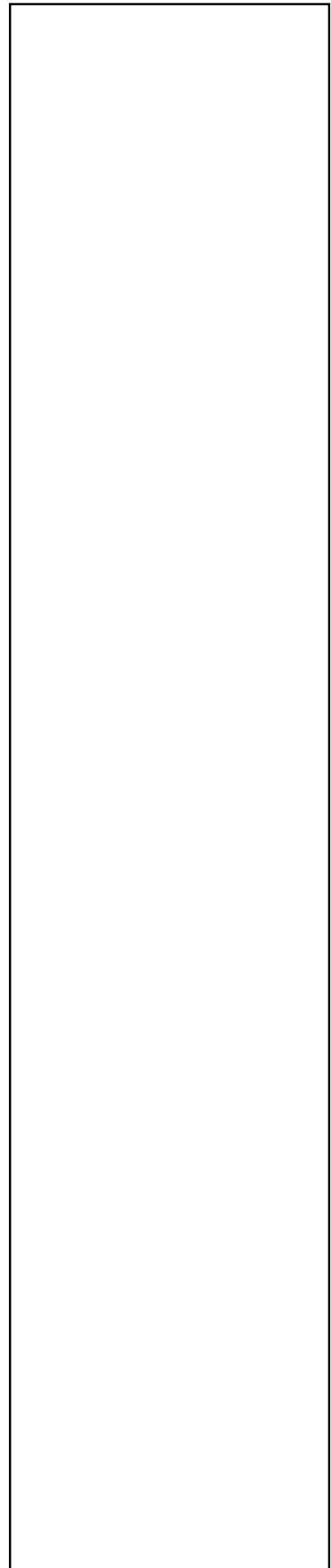
Training and supervision

- ✓ Most workers do not know how to take off or put on contaminated gloves safely. Ask the glove supplier for training.
- ✓ Consider having a designated area for putting on and taking off gloves. Clean this area regularly.

- ✓ Tell employees:
 - where possible, to wipe gloves clean before taking them off;
 - to only use 'single use' gloves once;
 - to store clean gloves in a place free from contamination;
 - to wash their hands after taking off protective gloves; and
 - to dispose of contaminated gloves safely as hazardous waste.

Useful links

- 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.



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.



Selection of Protective gloves

Fill in the selection table below and show it, with safety data sheets, to your PPE supplier.

Information to help your PPE supplier	
Task / Job name (one activity only - eg clearing spill)	
Chemicals in product (Section 2 of Safety Data Sheet)	
Physical form of product	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas <input type="checkbox"/> Liquid <input type="checkbox"/> Solid <input type="checkbox"/> Paste <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
If a solid, dustiness	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
If a liquid, boiling point	___ °C <input type="checkbox"/> Water-based
Temperature the product is used at?	<input type="checkbox"/> Room temperature <input type="checkbox"/> ___ °C
How long does the task take?	___ hours / ___ minutes
How many times a day?	___ times
What hand contact (worst case)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Dipped <input type="checkbox"/> Splashed <input type="checkbox"/> Touch contact
How far does the contamination get?	<input type="checkbox"/> Hands <input type="checkbox"/> Forearms <input type="checkbox"/> Above elbow
Are there other hazards?	<input type="checkbox"/> Hot <input type="checkbox"/> Cold <input type="checkbox"/> Sharp <input type="checkbox"/> Abrasive <input type="checkbox"/> Electric shock <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Important! What range of glove sizes needed?	
Is special sensitivity or dexterity needed for the job?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No