Surface preparation: Pressure blasting (small items)

Control approach 3  Containment

Access and premises
✓ Only allow access to authorised staff.

Equipment
✓ Can you use wet blasting or high-pressure water jetting in place of dry abrasive blasting?
✓ Use a fully enclosed cabinet or booth for blasting, held under negative pressure.
✓ Fit a pressure gauge, interlocked with the power supply.
✓ You need a high standard of filtration for the air discharged from the booth.
✓ Discharge cleaned, extracted air to a safe place outside the building, away from doors and windows.

Procedures
✓ Run the booth for two minutes after blasting has ceased to clear the air.

Maintenance, examination and testing
✓ Follow the instructions in the manual - keep equipment in effective and efficient working order.
✓ If any equipment is faulty, stop work until it is repaired.
✓ Daily, look for signs of damage to ducting, fans and air filters. Noisy or vibrating fans can indicate a problem.
✓ At least once a week, check that the extraction system and gauges work properly.
✓ You need to know the manufacturer’s specifications to check the extraction’s performance.
✓ If this information isn’t available, hire a competent ventilation engineer to determine the performance needed for effective control.
✓ Keep this information in your testing log-book.
Get a competent ventilation engineer to examine the extraction thoroughly and test its performance at least once a month. See the HSE publication HSG54 - see ‘Further information’.

Test any RPE at least once every three months.

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

Review records - failure patterns show where preventive maintenance is needed.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Ask your safety equipment supplier to help you get the right PPE.

Provide storage for clean and contaminated PPE.

Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

RPE should not be needed if the enclosure is designed correctly and working properly.

Use a P3 standard of RPE (assigned protection factor 20) for maintenance and cleaning. See sheet R3.

Make sure all RPE is properly fit-tested - get advice from your supplier.

Make sure that workers check their RPE works properly before use.

Replace RPE filters as recommended by your supplier. Throw away disposable masks after one use.

Keep RPE clean and store it away from dust.

Other protective equipment

Use a properly equipped contract laundry or a suitable equivalent to wash work clothing.

Skin creams help in washing contamination from the skin. After-work creams help to replace skin oils.

Caution: Never allow use of compressed air for removing dust from clothing.

Health monitoring

You should consider health monitoring. See sheet G401.

Consult an occupational health professional - see ‘Useful links’.

Cleaning and housekeeping

Clear up abrasive spills and dusts every day.

Clean the general workroom once a week.

Use a Type H vacuum cleaner fitted with a HEPA filter to clear up dust.

Caution: Don’t clean up with a brush or compressed air.

Training and supervision

Tell workers that dust from surface treatment processes can cause serious lung diseases.

Working in the right way and using the controls correctly is important for exposure control. Train and supervise workers. See sheet WL0.
Employee checklist

☐ Do you know how to use the controls properly?

☐ Is the equipment in good condition and working properly?

☐ Check that any RPE works properly every time you use it.

☐ Use, maintain and store your protective equipment in accordance with instructions.

☐ Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage.

☐ If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don’t just carry on working.

☐ Co-operate with health monitoring.

☐ Wash your hands before eating, drinking, or using the lavatory.

☐ Never clean your hands with solvents or concentrated cleaning products.

☐ Use skin creams provided as instructed.

Further information

- Maintenance, examination and testing of local exhaust ventilation
- Respiratory protective equipment at work: A practical guide
- For environmental guidelines see sheet WL0

Useful links

- Your trade association may advise on health and safety consultants and training providers.
- For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit 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.
- 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 document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.
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