

# P0

## COSHH essentials for printers

# Advice for managers

**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.**

## Introduction

HSE have produced these advice sheets to help employers assess and control risks from hazardous substances in the workplace. For some common tasks the sheets take into account the health hazards (and exposure potential) of substances used or produced to identify an approach appropriate to control the risks.

The COSHH printing series describes good practice for controlling exposures to hazardous substances encountered in the printing process. They cover the key points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level. Follow all the points, or use equally effective measures to comply with workplace exposure limits (WELs).

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## What the sheets cover

Reducing exposure to an adequate level always involves a mixture of equipment and ways of working. This means employers should:

- choose the most effective and reliable control measures;
- ensure they are used properly by instructing, training and supervising workers;
- ensure they keep on working by maintaining the control measures;
- check and review all elements of control measures regularly for their continued effectiveness.
- Each sheet gives advice on how to achieve this for a particular task.

## Hazards

- Frequent contact with solvent based substances used in printing processes can cause dermatitis, a common problem in the industry.
- Some solvent based substances can be absorbed through the skin and cause harm elsewhere in the body

- Some of the solvent based substances can be harmful if a high concentration of their vapour is breathed in. They can cause dizziness, drowsiness and other effects on the central nervous system.
- Acrylate inks may cause skin allergies.
- UV light can cause skin and eye damage.
- Ozone, generated by UV light, can irritate the airways
- Isocyanate-based products can cause asthma and skin allergies
- Check safety data sheets for any workplace exposure limits

### How to use the sheets

Consider the processes/tasks and hazardous substances in your workplace.

- Look for opportunities to substitute with less hazardous materials.
- Examine the advice sheets for each of the tasks.
- Examine the essential information sheets listed on each advice sheet.
- Compare operations in your workplace with recommendations in the advice sheets for all of the relevant tasks.
- Record your findings (this forms part of your risk assessment).
- Record any actions you need to take covering: issues identified, planned actions, target completion date, person responsible, status of any issues, and a review of effectiveness.
- Keep a record of your actions to prevent exposure of workers to hazardous materials.

You may have to change old working practices or spend money on new controls. Decide how best to make any changes required 'across the board'. If you are in doubt, seek expert help, don't give up! Ask your trade association, trade union or contact a consultant (see Further information).

### Essential information

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

CGS S101 – Selection of personal protective equipment.

G403– Health surveillance for occupational dermatitis.

### Further Information

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@williamslea.com](mailto:commissioning@williamslea.com)