

SR17

COSHH Essentials for
service and retail

Valeting of vehicles with solvent-based products

Control approach 1 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 for the valeting of vehicles with solvent-based products.

It covers the key steps 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 exposure to many solvents can lead to dermatitis. Some can also damage your eyes.
- ✓ Solvents and solvent-based products produce vapours that can cause headaches, dizziness, and nausea.
- ✓ Solvents used inside cars can lead to insufficient breathing air and workers falling unconscious.

Caution: Before carrying out any work in a confined space, refer to the specific guidance in HSE publication L101 *Safe work in confined spaces*.

- ✓ Some solvents can be flammable, so your controls must suit those hazards too. Look at the safety data sheet for more information.

Caution: Aerosol propellants are often flammable.

Access to work area

- ✓ Only allow access to authorised and appropriately trained people.

Equipment and procedures

- ✓ If possible, substitute solvent-based products with solvent-free cleaning products, adhesives etc.
- ✓ Provide a good standard of general ventilation. This can be natural ventilation from doors, windows etc. or controlled, where air is supplied and/or removed by powered fans. Ensure that supplied or make-up air comes from an uncontaminated area.
- ✓ Store products safely in a cool, dry, dark place in such a way as to be able to retain any spills. Only store the amount you need.
- ✓ Read the instructions on the label carefully, following them for use.
- ✓ Put caps back on containers immediately after use and wipe the outside clean.

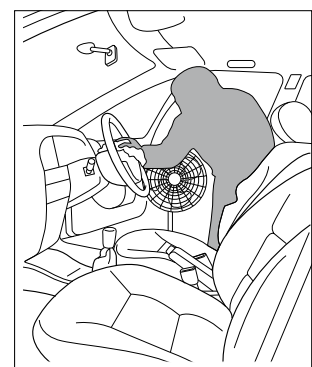


Figure 1 – Supplying fresh air to valeting activity in the close confines of a saloon car

- ✓ Dispose of all unused products safely.
- ✓ Reduce cross-contamination by washing out equipment after use.

Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

- ✓ RPE is not normally needed when a good standard of general ventilation is provided.

Caution: In the unlikely event of a requirement to carry out work in a confined space, refer to the specific guidance in HSE publication L101 *Safe work in confined spaces*, and seek expert advice.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Provide a waterproof suit and a visor for low-pressure cleaning.
- ✓ Provide and ensure that workers use suitable 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.
- ✓ Provide waterproof, slip-resistant footwear and protective goggles.
- ✓ Consult workers to ensure that the PPE will be suitable for them.
- ✓ Ensure that all items of PPE are compatible.
- ✓ Make suitable arrangements for the maintenance, storage and replacement of PPE.

Personal decontamination and skin care

- ✓ Keep chemicals off 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 will 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). Practise how to do this.
- ✓ Dispose of hazardous waste safely in a labelled, lidded bin and follow local authority waste management guidance.
- ✓ Provide good clean welfare facilities.
- ✓ Use a contract laundry or a suitable equivalent to wash work clothing. Don't allow workers to wash work clothing at home.

Health surveillance

- ✓ Carry out health surveillance if workers use a product labelled 'May cause sensitisation by skin contact' or 'May cause sensitisation by inhalation'. In such cases, you 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.
- ✓ It may be helpful to consult an occupational health professional on what the health surveillance should cover.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Tell workers about the hazards associated with their work and how to recognise early signs of asthma and dermatitis.
- ✓ Provide workers with training on:
 - working safely with hazardous substances;
 - when and how to use controls;
 - how to check they are working;
 - what to do if something goes wrong.
- ✓ Provide supervision – ensure that safe work procedures are followed.
- ✓ Involve managers and supervisors in health and safety training.

Essential information

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

S102 – Selecting personal protective equipment

G402 – Health surveillance for occupational asthma

G403 – Health surveillance for occupational dermatitis

Further information

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

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

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>

Safe work in confined spaces. Confined Spaces Regulations 1997. Approved Code of Practice, Regulations and guidance L101, HSE Books 2014. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l101.htm>

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

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>

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 the controls?
- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage to equipment.
- If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don't just carry on working.
- Use, maintain and store your PPE in accordance with instructions.
- Wash your 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.

Other hazards

- Wet work.
- Slips and trips.