

# SR22

COSHH Essentials for  
service and retail

## Solvent-based adhesives (small-scale work)

### Control approach 2 Engineering control

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 when using solvent-based adhesives for small-scale work, eg re-soleing shoes, attaching fabrics or mounting photographs.

It covers the key points 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

- ✓ The use of solvent-based adhesives will produce vapours which, when inhaled, can cause headache, dizziness, nausea and other ill-health symptoms.
- ✓ Contact with many chemicals can lead to dermatitis. Some chemicals can damage the eyes if they come into contact with them, eg via your fingers.
- ✓ Avoid using products containing n-hexane – this causes nerve damage.
- ✓ Superglues (cyanoacrylates) give off very irritating vapours and can bond to skin/eyes in seconds.
- ✓ Some products can cause skin allergies and asthma or may be flammable – check the Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

#### Access to work area

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

#### Equipment and procedures

- ✓ Provide suitable local exhaust ventilation (LEV), eg an extraction booth, if working with adhesives for more than 30 minutes a day.
- ✓ Airflow must be sufficient to control airborne contaminants effectively. This will depend on the design, the size of opening, and the type of process and substance being controlled.
- ✓ Provide an easy way of checking that the LEV is working, eg airflow indicator or equivalent.
- ✓ Discharge extracted air to a safe place safe outside the building, away from doors, windows, air inlets and other premises. Have a supply of clean air coming into the workroom to replace the extracted air.

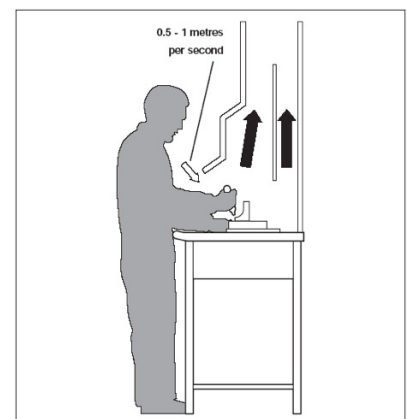


Figure 1 – Extraction booth

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- ✓ 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.
  - ✓ Store products safely in a cool, dry, dark, ventilated place in such a way as 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.
  - ✓ Plan what to do in case of a spill. Tell staff what the plan is and practise it.

### Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

- ✓ RPE is not normally needed.

### Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Check the product labels and SDS for PPE requirements.
- ✓ Ask your supplier to advise on suitable PPE.
- ✓ Provide 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 eye protection.
- ✓ Consult workers to ensure that the PPE will be suitable for them.
- ✓ Make suitable arrangements for the correct maintenance, storage and replacement of PPE.

### Personal decontamination and skin care

- ✓ Keep chemicals off skin – wash off any splashes immediately. Keep release agents and first aid kit nearby in case of emergencies.
- ✓ Provide warm water, mild skin cleansers, and soft paper or fabric towels for drying. Avoid abrasive cleansers.
- ✓ Provide pre-work skin creams, which 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.**

### Maintenance, examination and testing

- ✓ Keep all equipment used for the task in effective working order. Maintain it as advised by the manufacturer, supplier or installer.
- ✓ Check for signs of damage to control equipment before starting work.
- ✓ Have equipment thoroughly examined and tested against its performance standard at suitable intervals.
- ✓ For LEV, a user manual or log book is helpful in setting out the frequency of checking, maintenance or parts replacement.
- ✓ For LEV with no user manual or log book, you may need the help of a competent person. They can determine the performance needed for adequate control.
- ✓ LEV systems require a statutory ‘thorough examination and test’ (TExT).
- ✓ Get a competent person to perform the TExT at least once every 14 months.
- ✓ Carry out all actions arising from the TExT.

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- ✓ Keep an employer record for five years of TExT information such as target extraction rates, which show that the LEV is performing as originally intended.
  - ✓ Several measures are available to check the effectiveness of controls. These range from simple qualitative (eg smoke tubes) to complex quantitative techniques (eg air sampling); the latter are usually for higher-risk scenarios. See sheet G409 in Essential information.
  - ✓ HSG258 provides more detailed information on LEV systems and legal and competence requirements. See Further information.

### 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 and absorb liquid spills with granules.
- ✓ Never pour waste or still residues down the drain.
- ✓ Dispose of waste (contaminated tools/brushes/rags etc.) through a specialist contractor and follow local authority waste management guidance.

### Health surveillance

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Consult an occupational health professional on the level of health surveillance required.

### Training and supervision

- ✓ Provide supervision – ensure that safe work procedures are followed.
- ✓ 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;
  - how the LEV system works;
  - how to use the LEV to get the best out of it;
  - how to check that the LEV is working;
  - what to do if something goes wrong.
- ✓ Involve managers and supervisors in health and safety training.
- ✓ Training records are helpful to demonstrate that training has taken place.

### 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

G409 – Exposure measurement: Air sampling

## Further information

*Working with solvents: A guide to safe working practices* Leaflet INDG273(rev1), HSE 2014. [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg273.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg273.pdf)

Skin at work web pages: [www.hse.gov.uk/skin](http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin)

Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register [www.oshcr.org/](http://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>

You can find the full COSHH Essentials series at [www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm)

*Clearing the air: A simple guide to buying and using local exhaust ventilation (LEV)* INDG408(rev1), HSE 2017. [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg408.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg408.pdf)

*Controlling airborne contaminants at work: A guide to local exhaust ventilation (LEV)* HSG258 (third edition), HSE Books 2017, ISBN 978 0 7176 6613 3. [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg258.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg258.htm)

For information about health and safety, visit <https://books.hse.gov.uk> or <http://www.hse.gov.uk>

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To report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, email: [commissioning@tso.co.uk](mailto: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?
- Is the extraction working? Is there any obvious dust on work surfaces and ledges?
- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage to equipment before every job.
- 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.