

SR1

COSHH Essentials for
service and retail

Cleaning and disinfection using a low-pressure washer

Personal protective equipment (PPE) /
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 control of exposure during cleaning and disinfection using a low-pressure washer (typically 100–120 bar).

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.

This sheet does not cover ultra high-pressure (typically above 250 bar) water jetting.

Hazards

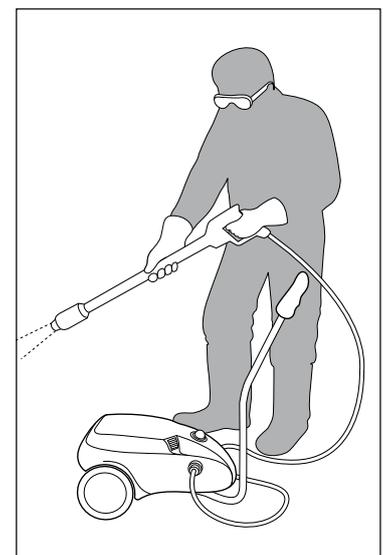
- ✓ Contact with many cleaning and disinfection products or prolonged contact with water (wet-work) can lead to dermatitis. Some chemicals can also damage the eyes.
- ✓ Some cleaning and disinfection products may cause or aggravate asthma or may be flammable – check the Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

Access to work area

- ✓ Designate a segregated area for pressure washing, or do the job outdoors.
- ✓ Erect barriers and notices.
- ✓ Only allow access to authorised and appropriately trained people.

Equipment and procedures

- ✓ Remove heavy dirt deposits first.
- ✓ Dilute the cleaning agent to the right concentration.
- ✓ Avoid tripping hazards with the water line to the spray lance.
- ✓ Ensure that nearby electrical fittings are suitably waterproofed.
- ✓ Use a Residual Current Device (RCD).
- ✓ Store products safely in a cool, dry, ventilated, dark place, in such a way as to be able to retain any spills. Only store the amount you need.
- ✓ Keep products off the skin. Workers should wash off splashes and avoid contact with surfaces until they are dry.
- ✓ Reduce cross-contamination by washing out equipment after use.



Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

- ✓ RPE is not normally needed outdoors or when a good standard of general ventilation is provided indoors.
- ✓ RPE may be needed where this is not possible. In such cases, as a minimum, provide tight-fitting RPE with a filter cartridge capable of protecting against the chemical cleaner or disinfectant. See the chemical supplier's SDS and sheet R3 in Essential information.
- ✓ Fit testing is required for RPE with a tight-fitting face seal (see INDG479 in Further information).
- ✓ Workers wearing tight-fitting RPE must be clean shaven.
- ✓ Ensure RPE is compatible with other PPE worn.
- ✓ Workers should be trained how to check RPE is working properly before every use, how to fit it properly, and how to look after it.
- ✓ Keep RPE clean and store it in a clean place.
- ✓ Ensure workers discard disposable RPE at the end of the shift, or sooner if their RPE becomes blocked with dust.
- ✓ Change the filters on respirators in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and if:
 - the shelf-life expiry date has passed;
 - they are damaged or visibly contaminated;
 - they become harder to breathe through.
- ✓ For reusable RPE, a thorough maintenance, examination and test should be carried out at least once a month and recorded. However, if the RPE is used only occasionally, an examination and test should be carried out before use and, in any event, the interval should not exceed three months.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

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

Personal decontamination and skin care

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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 supplier or installer.

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 SDS instructions).
- ✓ Dispose of hazardous wastes safely and follow local authority waste management guidance.

Health surveillance

- ✓ If you use a product labelled ‘May cause sensitisation by skin contact’ or ‘May cause sensitisation by inhalation’, 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.
- ✓ Consult an occupational health professional on the level of health surveillance required.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Tell workers about the hazards associated with their work and how to recognise early signs of asthma and dermatitis.
- ✓ 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

INDG231 – Electrical safety and you: A brief guide

R3: UK Standard Assigned Protection Factor 20 (APF 20)

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/

You can find the full COSHH Essentials series at

www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm

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>

Respiratory protective equipment at work: A practical guide

HSG53 (fourth edition), HSE Books 2013, ISBN 978 0 7176 6454 2.

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg53.htm

INDG479 – Guidance on respiratory protective equipment (RPE) fit testing

Preventing contact dermatitis and urticaria at work INDG233(rev2), HSE 2015. www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg233.pdf

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

- Never direct the water jet at yourself or other people.
- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage before every job.
- If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don't just carry on working.
- Use, maintain and store your RPE and PPE in accordance with instructions.
- Wash 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.