

SR16

COSHH essentials for service and retail



This information will help employers (including the self-employed and franchisees) comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), as amended, to control exposure and protect workers' health.

It is also useful for trade union safety representatives.

This sheet describes good practice using general ventilation.

It covers the points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level.

It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Caution: All fuels are flammable. Keep ignition sources (lamps, heaters, sparks from welding or grinding, etc) well away. Hot work on tanks that have contained fuel is extremely dangerous.

Main points

- Petrol and diesel contain substances that may cause cancer. The vapours should not be breathed in, and the liquids should be kept off the skin.
- Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is dangerous for health if breathed in at high concentrations.
- Check that the controls are being used properly.

Work involving motor vehicle fuel (diesel, petrol and LPG)

Control approach 1 General ventilation

Access and premises

- ✓ Provide good washing facilities.

Equipment

- ✓ Always use a fuel retriever for draining tanks.
- ✓ Keep the workplace well ventilated; 5-10 air changes per hour, with a through draught.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Respiratory protection equipment (RPE) should not be needed if the extraction and ventilation are working properly.
- ✓ Provide coveralls or work clothing to protect skin from contamination.
- ✓ Provide protective gloves for tank dipping, and when fuel may contaminate hands. Single-use gloves are acceptable. If you must use latex gloves, use only 'low-protein, powder-free' gloves.
- ✓ Throw away single-use gloves every time they are taken off.
- ✓ Skin creams are important for skin protection and help in washing contamination from the skin. These are not 'barrier creams'. After-work creams help to replace skin oils.

Caution: Workers must not take work clothing home for washing. Use a contract laundry.

Procedures

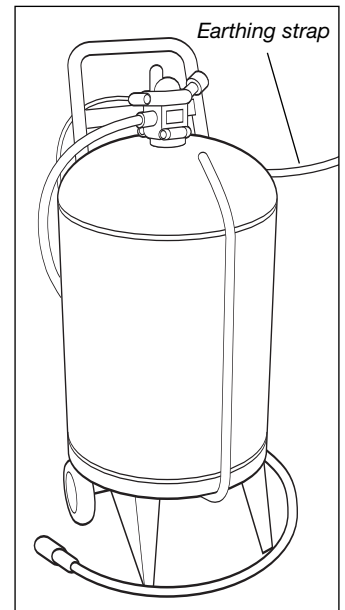
LPG fuel

- ✓ Change fuel cylinders in a well-ventilated place.

Petrol (gasoline)

- ✓ Carry petrol only in a clearly labelled and securely closed metal or plastic can.
- ✓ Contain and clear up spills immediately using absorbent granules. Scoop these into a lidded bin. Put petrol-soaked rags in a lidded bin. Keep these bins in a secure place outside.
- ✓ If you are splashed, keep well away from ignition sources and change clothes as quickly as possible. Put splashed clothing outdoors to dry.

Caution: Never drain petrol from a vehicle standing over a pit.



Diesel (DERV)

- ✓ Contain and clear up spills using absorbent granules. Scoop granules and soaked rags in lidded bins kept in a secure place outside.

Special Care

- ✓ Skin contact with liquid fuel can lead to soreness and itching, rashes or blistering (dermatitis).

Health monitoring

- ✓ Ask your workers to check their skin for dryness or soreness every six months. If these effects appear, check the proper use of skin creams and PPE.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- ✓ Keep the work area clean.
- ✓ Clear up spills promptly. Provide granules to absorb spills, and a lidded bin kept outside in a secure place to store waste for disposal.
- ✓ Dispose of hazardous waste through a specialist contractor.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Plan how to give first aid.
- ✓ Working in the right way and using the controls correctly is important for exposure control. Train and supervise workers. See sheet SR0.

Further information

- *Safe use of petrol in garages* Leaflet INDG331 HSE Books 2000 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 1836 6) Web version available at hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg331.pdf
- *Safe removal of petrol from vehicles* Local Authority Circular LAC 57/3 Health and Safety Executive/Local Authority Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA) 2000 Web version available at hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/index.htm

Useful links

- HSE priced and free publications are available from HSE Books Tel: 01787 881165 Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk.
- For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Textphone: 0845 408 9577 e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com.
- Contact the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) on 01332 298101 or at www.bohs.org for lists of qualified hygienists who can help you.

Employee checklist

- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage.
- If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don't just carry on working.
- Throw away single-use gloves every time you take them off.
- Clear up spills straight away. Absorb spills in granules and put them in a lidded bin.
- Wash your hands after use, and before and after eating, drinking, smoking and using the lavatory.
- Never clean your hands with concentrated cleaning products, solvents or fuel.
- Check your skin regularly for dryness or soreness - tell your supervisor if these symptoms appear.
- Use skin creams provided as instructed.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory 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 as illustrating good practice.