WELSHPOOL
TOWN COUNCIL

Welshpool Town Council
COSHH Record and Policy.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended) requires employers to:

- **ASSESS** the risks that arise from the use of hazardous substances. This will include any arrangements to deal with accidents, incidents or emergencies, such as those resulting from serious spillages. The assessment must also include the health and safety risks arising from the storage, handling or disposal of any of the substances.
- **PREVENT**, or if this is not reasonably practicable, **CONTROL** exposure to such substances.
- provide staff with information, instruction and training about the risks, steps and precautions the employer has taken to control these risks, e.g. provision of appropriate rubber gloves or appropriate eye protection.

The hazards

Some substances can cause asthma or other diseases, including cancer. Many can damage the skin, and some can cause serious long-term damage to the lungs.

The effect can be immediate, such as dizziness or stinging eyes, or can take many years to develop, such as lung disease. Many of the long-term or chronic effects cannot be cured once they develop.

Substances can take many forms and include:

- Chemicals.
- Products containing chemicals.
- Fumes.
- Dusts.
- Vapours.
- Mists.
- Nanotechnology.
- Gases and asphyxiating gases.
- Biological agents (germs). If the packaging has any of the hazard symbols, it is classed as a hazardous substance.
- Germs that cause diseases such as leptospirosis or legionnaires disease and germs used in laboratories.

What you have to do

You can prevent or reduce exposure to hazardous substances by:

- finding out what the health hazards are

- deciding how to prevent harm to health (risk assessment)
- providing control measures to reduce harm to health
- making sure they are used
- keeping all control measures in good working order
- providing information, instruction and training for workers and others
- providing monitoring and health surveillance in appropriate cases
- planning for emergencies

Containment

Employees/volunteers must Enclose the process or activity as much as possible to minimise the escape or release of the harmful substance.

Use closed transfer and handling systems and minimise handling of materials.

Restrict access to those people who need to be there.

Plan the storage of materials and use appropriate containers. Check that storage containers are correctly labelled and that incompatible materials, for example, acids and caustics are separated.

Plan the storage and disposal of waste.

Cleaning

Exposure to hazardous substances can occur during cleaning. Smooth work surfaces will allow easy cleaning.

Ensure each facility has the correct equipment and procedures to clear up spillages quickly and safely.

Clean regularly using a 'dust-free' method – vacuum, do not sweep.

Personal protective equipment

If you cannot adequately control exposure by other means, provide personal protective clothing and equipment, in combination with other control measures.

Do not automatically opt for personal protective equipment (PPE) as a control measure. It is not as reliable or effective as other measures.

Information and training

Employees/volunteers need to understand what the hazards and risks are, any workplace exposure limits, and what they need to do to protect themselves and others.

Training for employees/volunteers to use controls and PPE correctly.

Employees should know what to do if there is an accident (for example spillage) or emergency.

Contractors in your workplace also need to know what the risks are and how you are controlling them. In addition, you need to know if they are bringing hazardous substances onto your premises, and how they will prevent harm to your workers.

Record findings

Employees must record what steps they have taken to identify the risks.

They must make a list of the actions they have taken to control the health risks.

Review controls

Line managers/Town Clerk must review the controls they have put in place to make sure they are working.

They must also consider a review if employees have spotted any problems or if there have been any accidents or near misses.

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