

Tool Box Talk

Control of Substances Hazardous to
Health - COSHH

COSHH



- Why a presentation on COSHH?
- What is COSHH?
- What does it mean?
- COSHH Assessment

WHY?



- Because ‘substances’ harm people – currently more than 6,000 people die each year from disease caused by the workplace (250 die each year from workplace accidents)
- Legal requirement
- There is a lack of full understanding of COSHH
- File ‘sits on the shelf’

What is COSHH



- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
 - Oils & greases
 - Chemicals/additives
 - Cement
 - Thousands of others

What does it mean?



- That all hazardous substances are supplied with a data sheet
- That a competent person reviews this sheet and assesses any task with the material, then works out control measures – before it is used, not after an incident!.
- That the people using the material know and use the control measures.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)



- All have 16 headings and are set out similarly
- Include all relevant information on PPE use, first aid measures, health exposure, environmental spillage amongst others.
- On it's own it is not a COSHH assessment – it is a tool to help it be done.

COSHH Assessment



- The MSDS should be used when assessing the task being carried out.
- E.G. A COSHH assessment for the use of Concrete will involve a risk assessment of using the concrete – not just putting the concrete MSDS in a file!
- A standard Brett risk assessment form is adequate for carrying out a COSHH assessment



COSHH Assessment

Assessment Description				Brett Concrete COSHH Assessment No. 4								
Substance Group				Fresh concrete and screed								
Who Is At Risk?				Plant staff, Drivers, Fitters, Technical Staff								
Hazard	RAW RISK (NO control measure(s))			Current Control Measure(s)	OPERATIONAL RISK (WITH control measure(s))			Possible Future Improvements	RISK (WITH Improvements)			
	P Number	S Number	PxS "		P Number	S Number	PxS "		P Number	S Number	PxS "	
<p>Exposure when carrying out general maintenance on plant / truckmixers, cleaning up after spillage and testing can cause irritant contact dermatitis, allergic contact dermatitis and can lead to serious burns and ulceration on contact with eyes and skin.</p> <p>When used as intended, no environmental impact is anticipated. If spillage occurs, do not allow material to enter drains, sewers or watercourses.</p>	5	4	20	<p>PPE including safety glasses / visor, waterproof clothing, boots and gloves are worn when cleaning up or working in or near wet concrete / screed.</p> <p>Washing facilities available and eye wash station in place at plants and laboratory.</p> <p>Disposed of in accordance with local and national legal requirements.</p> <p>Entry into watercourses is avoided. Emergency spill procedure in place.</p>	1	4	4	Install washing facilities in technicians vans.	1	4	4	

P – Probability S – Severity

P: 1: V Rare, 2: Unlikely, 3: Occasional, 4: Probable, 6: Definite.

S: 1: V Minor, minimal harm to Env, 2: Less than 3 days, minor event washed/swep away naturally, 3: 3 days, clean up required +, 4: Major, significant. Pollution 5: Fatality, permanent damage to Env.

NOTE: If breaking up or drilling into hardened concrete / screed refer to Brett Concrete COSHH Assessment No.1

Five basic principles of risk assessment underlie the COSHH Regulations



- 1 Assessment of risk and the precautions required.
- 2 Introduction of appropriate measures to prevent or control risks.
- 3 Ensuring that control measures are used
- 4 Where necessary, monitoring the exposure of employees.
- 5 Informing, instructing and training employees of the risks and the precautions that need to be taken.

How Do I Recognise a Hazardous Substance?

There's more information on labels than you might think.



CORROSIVE



DANGEROUS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



EXPLOSIVE



(VERY) TOXIC



HARMFUL/IRRITANT



OXIDISING



HIGHLY OR EXTREMELY FLAMMABLE

All substances with one of these logos must have a COSHH assessment

COSHH is not just limited to these substances though!

Why isn't it used?



- Data sheets don't turn up with the material
- Diseases often don't become apparent as soon as the substances are used
- The Data Sheets are all in a file on the shelf – these magically protect people from harm!
- It is seen as time consuming

Why should it be done?



- To prevent:
 - Dermatitis
 - Liver/kidney/heart failure
 - Cancer
 - Lung disease
 - Acid/alkali burns
 - Loss of sight
 - Blood poisoning
 - Etc, etc, etc.....

Summary



- Diseases don't become noticeable until it's too late.
- Prevent them in the first place by doing the assessment – not just having the material safety data sheet (MSDS).