



Guide to COSHH

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Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

The Details

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (2004) is legislation that applies to employees to ensure that exposure to hazardous materials is controlled and regulated to prevent ill health.

COSHH legislation covers a wide range of substances that are directly related to work activities such as cleaning agents.

Products that are an indirect result of activities such as fumes are also covered under COSHH in addition to some naturally occurring substances such as microorganisms and some dusts.

The Principles / Rules

If employees are not appropriately protected from over exposure, harmful side effects can occur ranging from mild skin irritation to death. Under COSHH regulations employers are required to follow eight steps. These eight steps that are described in more detail in the 'best of' section of the site, involve the assessment, monitoring and safety precautions involved in dealing with certain harmful substances.

In brief these eight steps are as follows: -

1. Assess the risks
2. Decide what precautions are needed
3. Prevent or adequately control exposure
4. Ensure that control measures are used and maintained
5. Monitor the exposure
6. Carry out appropriate health surveillance
7. Prepare plans and procedures to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies
8. Ensure employees are properly informed, trained and supervised

Examples

In applying symbols to a real life work situation, washing up liquid would typically be a substance without a hazchem symbol, but bleach would display an irritant logo. Because of this, warning assessment of risks and associated precautionary procedures for employees need to be enforced.

Other Information

All most all substances that can be harmful to health are covered under COSHH regulations, however there are some exceptions. Some harmful substances are covered under their own legislation such as radioactive material or substances with explosive properties.

Legal regulations stipulate that suppliers must label products that are dangerous with HAZCHEM symbols. The following symbols are examples of what can be found on hazardous products.



Regulations / Legislation Applicable

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (2004)

Disclaimer


The above is intended as a quick and brief insight into the requirements for the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2004 and the contents are for guide only. For further information regarding COSHH compliance visit www.coshh-essentials.org.uk for information on appropriate control measures when dealing with harmful substances

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