

CoSHH

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) Regulations 2002 (amended) requires employers to protect their employees and others from hazardous substances used in the workplace. Hazardous substances need to be identified and an assessment made of potential risks to health. Adequate control measures then need to be implemented, with training of employees and planning for emergencies.

Hazardous substances covered by CoSHH include:

- ◆ Chemical substances on the CLP List (supplied with a hazard warning labels)
- ◆ Dangerous mixtures
- ◆ Substances with Workplace Exposure Limits
- ◆ Substantial quantities of dust in air (e.g. flour, wood and silica)
- ◆ Biological agents (e.g. *Legionella*)
- ◆ Other substances that pose a health risk.

Occupational exposure may have both immediate and long-term **health impacts**. Each year in Britain there are 12 000 deaths from respiratory diseases and 8000 from cancer due to past exposure to gas, dust and fumes at work.

A **CoSHH Risk Assessment** should identify the risk posed by any hazardous substances used in, as well as generated by (e.g. soldering or welding fumes), the processes employed. Those at risk need to be identified (e.g. employees, contractors, visitors or members of the public). Suppliers have a duty to provide **Material Safety Data Sheets** with any hazardous substances they supply. This data is essential for helping to complete the Risk Assessment.

As the HSE reminds us, however, simply keeping a copy of the Safety Data Sheet does not constitute a CoSHH Risk Assessment.

To provide **adequate control measures** many areas need to be considered. Storage facilities are required that protect substances from heat, sunlight and moisture, with access by authorised personnel only. Local exhaust ventilation and personal protective equipment may be necessary, with appropriate maintenance checks being made

regularly. Disposal of substances, containers and residues should avoid contamination of ground water supplies and comply with local authority regulations. In addition, air monitoring may be needed to check working exposure limits are not exceeded, with a health surveillance of personnel.



Exposure to paints, lacquers and varnishes, isocyanates, silica dust, pesticides, cleaning products and solvents may result in serious diseases only many years later.

Emergency planning ensures that in the event of an accident, first aid (e.g. shower, eye bath), fire (e.g. extinguishers) and spillage (e.g. spill kits) facilities are suitable.

Finally, all employees need to be kept up to date with **information and training** on the hazards and risks from the substances with which they work, and the use of control measures required to minimise these risks.

PAVY Ltd can help you with:

- ◆ CoSHH Risk Assessment
- ◆ Fire Risk Assessment
- ◆ Training: CoSHH Awareness, fire marshal.

For more information, call us
on 01865 349014 or
email: info@pavy.co.uk



[environmental, safety & quality accreditation specialists]

Pavy Ltd. 41 Beech Close, Faringdon, Oxfordshire, SN7 7EN T: 01865 349014 www.pavy.co.uk
Company registration: 06939230 Registered office: Charterford House, 75 London Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9BB. VAT No: 976 4301 03