

COSHH and Hazardous Substances — Safe System of Work

Display a copy where the work is done.

Before you start

- Ask whether the substance is needed at all, or whether something safer would do.
- Get the safety data sheet and read the hazard and precaution sections.
- Check the COSHH assessment covers this substance and this task.
- Set up the engineering control, extraction or ventilation before you start.
- Check gloves are right for this specific chemical, and RPE is fit tested for you.
- Know where the spill kit, eye wash and first aid are.

The numbers that get checked

Item	Requirement	Why
The hierarchy	Eliminate, substitute, engineer, then PPE LAST	COSHH reg 7. The most commonly ignored rule in the regulations
LEV testing	Normally at least every 14 months	Plus daily user checks
Face fit	Every tight-fitting mask, on the actual wearer, recorded	Untested mask means no protection
Facial hair	Clean shaven at the seal	Stubble breaks the seal
Gloves	Chosen for the specific chemical using breakthrough data	The wrong glove can be worse than none
Labelling	Never decant into an unlabelled or drinks container	People have died from this
Safety data sheet	Obtained before the substance arrives	And accessible to the people using it

While you are working

- Use the extraction or ventilation properly and keep it positioned correctly.
- Keep containers closed when not in use.
- Never decant into an unlabelled container.
- Never mix substances.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke in the work area.
- Wash before breaks and at the end of the shift.

Stop immediately if

- The extraction or ventilation stops working.
- You have no safety data sheet for what you are being asked to use.
- Your gloves are degrading, split or the wrong type.
- Your mask will not seal.

- You feel unwell, dizzy, short of breath or your skin reacts.
- There is a spill you are not equipped to deal with.

Scope and limitations — read before use

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