

Toolbox Talks

Hazardous Substances

Hazardous substances can cause long-term damage to health and are found in many of the products in use today.

- There are hazardous substances on all construction sites.
- Examples of construction materials which could be hazardous are:-
 - Cement
 - Adhesives
 - Admixtures
 - Cleaners
 - Decorative/Protective treatment for timber
 - Floor treatment/Finishes Formwork and Mould Treatment
 - Grouts
 - Sealant
 - Solvents
 - Weedkiller
- Hazardous substances can enter your body in the following ways:-
 - Ingestion, Absorption through skin, Inhalation or Injection
- Some examples of health effects are:-
 - Certain Dusts - can cause nasal cancer
 - Cement Dust - can cause lung disease or burns when wet
 - Isocyanate Paints - can cause industrial asthma
 - Oily Rags in pockets - can cause cancer of the scrotum
 - Silica dust - can cause silicosis and fibrosis
- Following an assessment, your employer **must** minimise the risks from any hazardous product that you are required to use.
 - A safer product should be used, eg: water-based paint instead of solvent-based paint.
 - A safer method should be devised eg: a brush application instead of a spray method or cutting concrete after it has been dampened down with water to control the dust.
 - You must be briefed on the findings of the assessment, including the risks and necessary control measures.
- Having been briefed, you should know:-

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Storage - Application - Disposal of waste material and empty containers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hazards - Special precautions - First aid requirements 	}	If not, Ask!
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- Where **protective clothing** is recommended following an assessment, it **must** be worn, eg:
 - Goggles – to prevent splashes of acids
 - Dust masks/Respirators to protect your lungs
 - Gloves – to prevent dermatitis or other burns
 - Wellington boots – to prevent cement burns to your skin

Questions:

- 1 Give an example of a hazardous substance?
- 2 Who must assess any risk to you from hazardous substances?
- 3 What examples can you give me of control measures in your work in relation to hazardous substances?

Remember:

You are damaging your health if you do not protect yourself from any hazardous substance or material that you are using

Further Information:- CIP Manual, Section 25