



## Control approach 1



This guidance sheet is for employers including the self-employed and franchisees

to help them comply with the requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) by controlling exposure to chemicals and protecting workers' health.

The sheet is part of HSE guidance *COSHH essentials: easy steps to control chemicals*. It describes the key points you need to follow to help reduce exposure to an adequate level. It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Get safety data sheets from your product supplier. Use these to identify the more dangerous chemicals, and less dangerous substitutes. Also check for flammability.

Solvent and solvent-based products produce vapours that can be breathed in.

Solvent vapour can cause headaches, dizziness and nausea.

General ventilation is the recommended approach.

Caution: aerosol propellants are often flammable.

Electrically powered equipment requires portable appliance testing (PAT).

# Valeting and cleaning cars with solvent-based products

## General ventilation

SR17

### Workplace and access

- ✓ Restrict access to those people who need to be there.

### Design and equipment

- ✓ Check to see if you can substitute with solvent-free products.
- ✓ Make sure there is a good through draught for work done inside a vehicle, eg by using a fan with the windows open. Solvents used inside cars have led to staff falling unconscious.
- ✓ Keep the workplace well ventilated - 5 to 10 air changes per hour with a through draught.
- ✗ Never decant treatment fluid into an unlabelled container.
- ✗ Don't store more than 50 litres of flammable liquid indoors. Use a flammables store.
- ✓ You need washing facilities for decontamination after handling products.

### Procedures

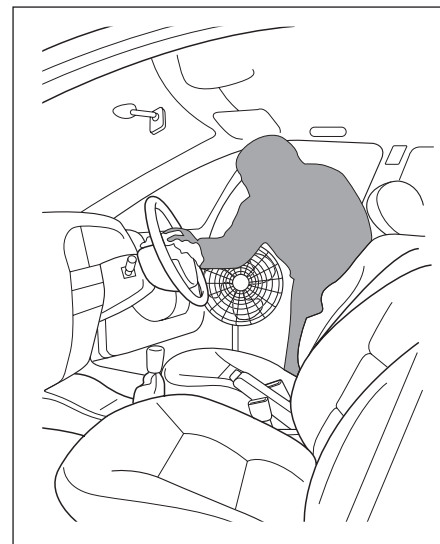
- ✓ Store products containing chemicals securely in a cool, dry, dark place, capable of keeping in spills. Don't store far more than you need.
- ✓ Read the instructions on the label carefully - follow the instructions for use.
- ✓ Put the cap back on the container immediately.
- ✓ Clean up spills promptly - practise how to do this.
- ✗ Never use aerosols or solvent-based trigger sprayers near a naked flame.
- ✓ Dispose of all products safely that you no longer need.

### Special care

- Contact with many chemicals can lead to skin soreness and itching, rashes, blistering (dermatitis). Some can also damage your eyes.
- Solvent vapours in some cleaners can cause dizziness and headaches.
- Products containing dichloromethane (methylene chloride) may cause cancer.

### Maintenance

- ✓ Follow instructions in maintenance manuals.
- ✓ Keep equipment in effective and efficient working order.



## Cleaning and housekeeping

- ✓ Keep the work area clean.
- ✓ Clean up spills promptly - practise how to do this.
- ✓ Dispose of empty containers and wastes safely.

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Follow the instructions on product labels.
- ✓ Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) may be needed. Seek advice from your RPE supplier. Make sure you fit the right cartridge before starting work.
- ✓ Make sure you know how to check that RPE fits correctly. Seek advice from your supplier.
- ✓ Use coveralls or work clothing to protect skin from contamination.
- ✓ Wear protective gloves - single-use nitrile gloves are acceptable. If you must use latex gloves, use only 'low-protein, powder-free' gloves.
- ✓ Throw away single-use gloves every time you take them off.
- ✓ Skin creams are important for skin protection and help in washing contamination from the skin. These are **not** 'barrier creams'. After work creams help to replace skin oils.
- ✗ Workers must not take work clothing home for washing. Use a contract laundry.

## Health advice

- ✓ Ask your workers to check their skin for dryness or soreness every six months. If these effects appear, check the proper use of skin creams and PPE.
- ✓ If you use a product labelled 'may cause sensitisation by skin contact' or 'may cause sensitisation by inhalation', seek specialist advice. See Further information.

## Training

- ✓ Show your workers this sheet and check that they understand it.
- ✓ Tell them about the risks of using the product - see product labels or Section 15 of the safety data sheet from your product supplier.
- ✓ Make sure everyone knows how to clear up spills promptly and safely.
- ✓ Warn workers about blood-borne diseases, eg hepatitis.

## Supervision

- ✓ Check that the extraction is working properly, PPE is being used properly, and the rules on personal hygiene are being followed.
- ✓ Get safety data sheets from your suppliers and identify the more dangerous chemicals. Consider substitution.
- ✓ Swap workers over if you need to use hand-held tools for long periods of time to avoid hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS).

## Further information

- *Assessing and managing risks at work from skin exposure to chemical agents: Guidance for employers and health and safety specialists* HSG205  
HSE Books 2001 ISBN 0 7176 1826 9
- *Preventing dermatitis at work: Advice for employers and employees*  
Leaflet INDG233 HSE Books 1996 (single copy free or priced packs of 15  
ISBN 0 7176 1246 5)
- Health and safety consultants: the BOHS Faculty of Occupational Hygiene keeps lists of qualified hygienists who can help you. Contact BOHS on 0133 229 8087 or at [www.bohs.org/](http://www.bohs.org/)

## Employee checklist

- Look for signs of leaks, wear and damage.
- If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don't just carry on working.
- Wash your hands after use, and before and after eating, drinking, smoking and using the lavatory.
- Never clean your hands with concentrated cleaning products, solvents or fuel.
- Clear up chemical spills promptly. Absorb liquid spills in granules and dispose of them safely.
- Throw away single-use gloves every time you take them off.
- Check your skin regularly for dryness or soreness - tell your supervisor if these symptoms appear.
- Use skin creams provided as instructed.



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