

SR24

Storing chemical products (small scale)

COSHH essentials for service and retail



This information will help employers (including the self-employed and franchisees) comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), as amended, to control exposure and protect workers' health.

It is also useful for trade union safety representatives.

This sheet describes good practice using general ventilation.

It covers the points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level.

It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Some chemicals can be flammable, so your controls must suit those hazards too. Look at the safety data sheet for more information.

Main points

- Safe storage - segregate chemicals that might react together, and contain spills from burst containers.
- Check that all the controls are being used properly.

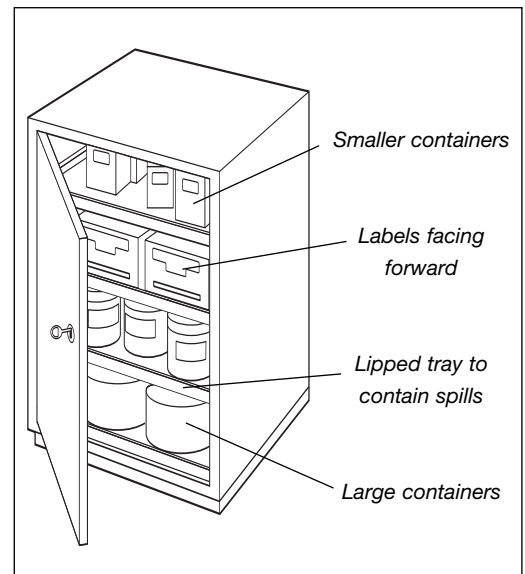
Control approach 1 General ventilation

Access and premises

- ✓ Ensure that only trained workers have access to stored chemical products. Keep the storage container locked.
- ✓ Provide good washing facilities.

Equipment

- ✓ Keep the store area well ventilated; 5-10 air changes per hour with a through draught.
- ✓ Keep a spill clean up kit nearby. Ask your supplier for advice.



Caution: Never decant concentrate into an unlabelled container. Never re-use a concentrate container. Dispose of it safely or return it to the supplier. Don't store more than 50 litres of flammable liquid indoors. Use a flammables store.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- ✓ Follow the instructions on product labels.
- ✓ Ask your safety-clothing supplier to help you get the right PPE.
- ✓ You may need respiratory protective equipment (RPE) in case of a spill. Seek advice from your RPE supplier.
- ✓ Provide 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 they are taken off.

Procedures

- ✓ Keep apart:
 - solid and liquid products;
 - flammable and non-flammable liquids;
 - acids and alkalis; and
 - wastes.
- ✓ Store products containing chemicals securely in a cool, dry, dark place, capable of keeping in spills. Don't store far more than you need.

- ✓ Store containers so their labels face forwards.
- ✓ Store heavier items and corrosive chemicals on lower shelves.
- ✓ Ensure that containers are easy to pour from, don't dribble, and don't trap liquid in a rim.
- ✓ Try to buy solid chemicals in tablet form, or in a wide-necked container such that it is easy to scoop out granules.

Caution: Never store chemicals in open containers.

Special Care

- ✓ Contact with many chemicals can lead to skin soreness and itching, rashes, blistering (dermatitis). Some can also damage the eyes.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- ✓ Keep the storage area clean and well organised.
- ✓ Clear up spills immediately. Absorb liquids in granules. Scoop solids or absorbed liquids into a marked secure container. Practise how to do this.
- ✓ Dispose of hazardous waste through a specialist contractor.

Training and supervision

- ✓ Tell workers about the risks of using the product - see products labels or Section 15 of the safety data sheet.
- ✓ If products can cause skin or eye damage, plan how to give first aid.
- ✓ Working in the right way and using the controls correctly is important for exposure control. Train and supervise workers. See sheet SR0.

Useful links

- HSE priced and free publications are available from HSE Books
Tel: 01787 881165 Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk.
- For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Textphone: 0845 408 9577 e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com.
- Contact the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) on 01332 298101 or at www.bohs.org for lists of qualified hygienists who can help you.

Employee checklist

- If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Don't just carry on working.
- Clear up spills straight away. Absorb spills in granules and put them in a lidded bin.
- Wash your hands after use, and before and after eating, drinking, smoking and using the lavatory.
- Never clean your hands with concentrated cleaning products or solvents.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.