

C15 GUIDANCE

SR4 Manual cleaning and disinfecting surfaces

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

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.

Disinfectants are biocidal products. Authorised products are safe for use so long as you follow the instructions on the label.

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

Main points

- Can you get products 'ready for use'?
- Avoid or minimise skin contact with chemicals.
- Check that all the controls are being used properly.
- Consider substituting with safer products.

Access and premises

- Mark any pedestrian routes that can become slippery when wet.
- Provide good washing facilities.

Equipment

- Do you need colour-coded cloths, mops and buckets to minimise cross-contamination?
- Provide protective gloves.
- Remove heavy dirt deposits first.

Caution: never decant concentrate in an unlabelled container. Never re-use a concentrate container – dispose of it safely or return it to your supplier. Don't store more than 50 litres of flammable liquid indoors – use a flammable store.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Follow the instructions on product labels
- Ask your supplier to help you choose the right PPE.
- Provide protective gloves – single-use 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.

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- Provide waterproof, slip-resistant footwear.
- Skin creams are important for skin condition. These help in washing contamination from the skin. After work creams help to replace skin oils.

Caution: 'barrier creams' do not make a full barrier.

Procedures

- Store products securely in a cool, dry, dark place, capable of keeping in spills. Don't store far more than you need.
- Ensure that workers follow the instructions for use by reading the label, and make up solutions for immediate use only.
- Put the cap back on the container immediately.
- Keep products off your skin. Workers should wash off any splashed and avoid contact with surfaces until they are dry.

Special care

- Contact with many products can lead to dermatitis. Some can also damage the eyes.
- Some products may cause asthma – check the safety data sheet.
- Take special care using caustic soda (sodium hydroxide). Splashes in the eye can cause blindness.
- Never add any other chemical to concentrates that contain bleach (sodium hypochlorite solution). This can cause a dangerous gas (chlorine) to be given off.

Health monitoring

- Ask your workers to check their skin for dryness or soreness every month.
- If you use a product labelled 'may cause sensitisation by skin contact' or 'may cause sensitisation by inhalation', seek specialist advice.

Cleaning and housekeeping

- Wash out the equipment after use. Dispose of this waste liquid safely.
- Clean up spills promptly – practise how to do this.

Training and supervision

- Tell workers about the risks of using the product – see products labels or section 15 of the safety data sheet.
- Working in the right way and using the controls correctly is important for exposure control. Train and supervise workers. See sheet SR0.