

Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health



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COSHH in the Catering Workplace

Why control COSHH?

COSHH controls are a legal requirement for each business, and necessary to prevent injury to persons working at the business and the public. **The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**

What should we include in COSHH?

Chemicals and Cleaning Products will be covered by this folder, but other substances to consider within your businesses may include dust (can cause lung disease), cooking fuels (can cause poisoning) , wet working (Can cause dermatitis) and so on.

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How do we plan COSHH?

Staff who undertake cleaning tasks within any business should know about the products they might use, and the appropriate safety precautions to take with each product. This knowledge can be gained through the business drawing up a risk-assessment for each substance. This assessment should consider the chemical or product that will be used, swell as the different uses for that product. The risk assessment should identify the potential hazards, and take appropriate steps to reduce or control the risk, and protect individuals from harm.

This is the safe handling of COSHH in the workplace.

COSHH Golden Rules

I can't find my safety data sheet. What should I do?

Suppliers of chemicals are legally required to make safety data sheets available for the goods they provide. Go for Green makes these Safety Data Sheets available on the product page on the website at www.goforgreenuk.com

You can view, download and print from the site or email us for a copy at www.goforgreenuk.com

Never use any substance for any other purpose than it was designed for.

When a manufacturer produces a chemical, it has a particular purpose in mind - and they will have tested it before taking it to market. Protect yourself from harm by only using it for the purpose it was designed for. Always follow manufacturers instructions.

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Can I mix some products together for added cleaning power?

This sounds like a silly question, but is one of the most casually accepted misgivings about cleaning. Using cleaning agent and then adding a little drop of another one because it smells nice or because “it is strong and cleans well” can potentially cause a dangerous reaction. Don't forget this can include the occasions when you are using a chemical to clean a surface - it doesn't work, so you use another - **THIS IS STILL MIXING CHEMICALS!** Some chemicals are acids, some alkali and some chlorine, mixing these can cause fatal reactions.

Never decant chemicals unless the container is properly labelled.

If the label has completely worn away (or even has no label at all) then don't use it. You should report it to your manager, and the product should be removed from the cleaning cupboard. If you don't know what the product is, then you certainly shouldn't be using it, If you have a bottle without a label, then you could attract a hefty fine from the HSE too! Go for Green have colour coded bottles on the website that can be used to decant larger containers into. Goggles, funnels and gloves should be considered when doing this and this should be considered when preparing the risk assessment for each product/task.

It is best practice to store chemicals in a locked cupboard. Remember to keep Acids away from Alkali and Chlorine away from both. Extra care should be taken in food areas.

When the consequence of mixing chemicals can be a case of life or death, it makes sense to keep the products separate in your cleaning cupboard. Particular products to watch out for are bleach (chlorine), toilet bowl cleaner (generally strong acid) and hard surface cleaners or carpet pre-sprays (generally alkalis).

Always wear the appropriate protective clothing and use the correct equipment.

Always wear the appropriate PPE, and yes that does include wearing goggles and gloves when decanting chemicals.

Keep Material Safety Data Sheets and any other relevant information in a safe accessible place.

It is a good idea to put all your safety data sheets in a safe and readily accessible place - the most logical place to put your folder is in the cleaning cupboard to ensure the cleaners have them to hand should they need them.

Always add chemical to water rather than water to chemicals to avoid splash-back and excess foam.

A simple rule, that makes everyones lives easier as well as being much safer.

Remember - More is not always better!

Something that is very important and worth repeating - using more is definitely not always better. In fact it can mean you leave a sticky residue that attracts the dirt back quicker, or even leave the surface slippery or smeary.