

MR0

COSHH essentials in motor vehicle repair



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

It describes good practice for managing the control of exposure to isocyanates from two-pack (2K) paints, seals, adhesives, etc.

It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives.

Advice for managers

Introduction

Isocyanates can cause:

- asthma by breathing in paint mist; and
- dermatitis following skin contact.

There is no evidence for cancer from isocyanates in paints.

- Exposure relates to 'total isocyanate'.
- 'Total isocyanate' has workplace exposure limits (WELs) at 0.02 mg/m³ (8-hour TWA) and 0.07 mg/m³ (15-minute reference period).
- You need to keep exposures as low as is reasonably practicable below these limits.

Control exposure to isocyanates to stop occupational asthma developing. If an individual develops isocyanate-related occupational asthma, tiny amounts could trigger an attack. Avoid further exposure.

This is one in a series of advice sheets relating to asthma for those who work in motor vehicle repair

- MR1 Mixing two-pack (2K) paint containing isocyanate
- MR2 Spraying two-pack (2K) products in a spray booth or room
- MR3 Cleaning two-pack (2K) paint spray guns
- MR4 Brush or roller application of two-pack (2K) products
- MR5 SMART spraying with two-pack (2K) products
- MR6 Hot work on painted panels (eg welding, cutting, grinding)

COSHH essentials for service and retail series includes advice on dermatitis and other health hazards

- SR1 Cleaning and disinfection using a low-pressure washer
- SR2 Diluting concentrates
- SR14 Vehicle exhaust fumes (in warehouses, garages, etc)
- SR16 Work involving motor vehicle fuel (diesel, petrol and LPG)
- SR17 Valeting etc with solvent-based products
- SR18 Charging batteries for electrically-powered vehicles
- SR19 Work with lubricants and waste oil
- SR21 Dust from abrasive wheels
- SR23 Degreasing with solvents (low volatility, small scale work)
- SR24 Storing products (small scale)

The risks

Getting these sheets help you to assess the isocyanate risk for stated tasks. Before acting, make sure the sheets' advice really fits your situation. Following all the advice means that you will normally comply with WELs and exposure will be as low as is reasonably practicable. Read the advice in each of the sheet(s) you downloaded. Compare it with what you do now. Put the right controls in place.

Action

You may already have the right controls in place, but are they all working properly? When were they last checked? Are they always used when needed?

You need to keep all controls in good working order. This means mechanical controls (eg extraction, personal protective equipment), administrative controls (eg supervision, health surveillance) and operator behaviour (following instructions). Look at all aspects of the advice, don't pick and choose. The points work together to provide 'adequate control'. See sheet G406 for advice on engineering controls.

You should carry out health surveillance for workers. See sheets G402, for occupational asthma, and G403 for occupational dermatitis. You also need to make exposure measurements using biological monitoring (see sheet G408) and may need air sampling (sheet G409). Show that control is being sustained – keep good records.

If you are in doubt, seek expert help. Remember, just because this advice means that you have to change old working practices or spend money on new controls, that doesn't make it unsuitable! Decide how best to make any changes required 'across the board'.

If you do need expert help, please don't give up. Ask your trade association, trade union, or log onto www.bohs.org.

Facilities

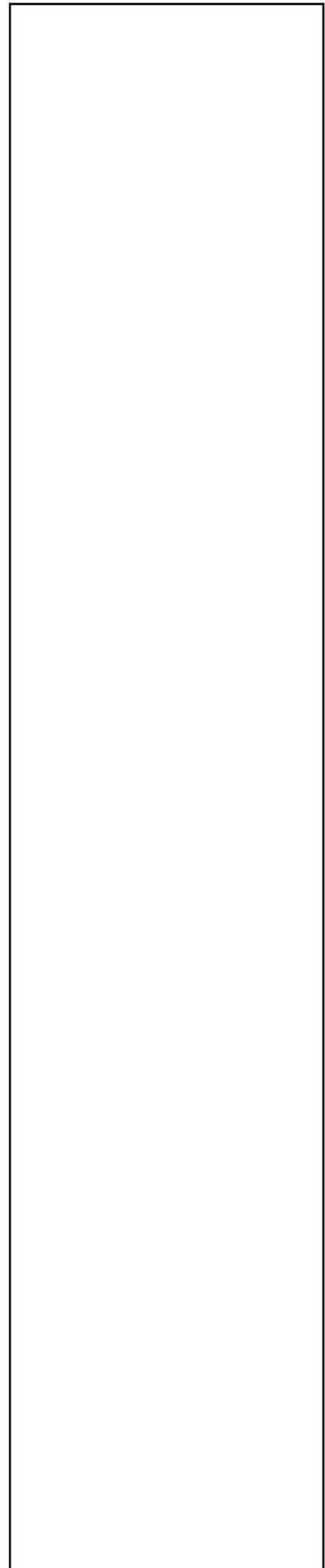
Provide clean facilities: a washroom with a skin care product dispenser; shower; storage for clean and contaminated work clothing; and a refreshment area.

Information, training and supervision

Tell workers:

- that isocyanates can cause asthma and dermatitis.
- that occupational asthma may lead to permanent disablement;

- to avoid breathing in mist and vapour;
- to do the job in the correct way;
- to always use air filtration and extraction equipment properly;
- to keep the workplace clean;
- if equipment is not working - report it;
- to keep their protective equipment clean, and wear it properly; and
- to check any PPE every time they put it on.



Train and supervise workers - you need to make sure they are doing the job in the right way, and using controls properly to reduce their exposure. Include supervisors and managers in health and safety training.

Training should include:

- how to use the mist and vapour controls and how to check that they are working;
- how to maintain and clean equipment safely;
- how to use and look after personal protective equipment (PPE); and
- what to do if something goes wrong.

Supervision means checking workers:

- use the controls provided;
- follow the correct work method;
- turn up for health surveillance; and
- are following the rules on personal hygiene and skin care.

Environmental guidelines

Releases and wastes may be regulated within the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) framework. You should consult your local authority or the Environment Agency.

In Scotland, consult the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

For more information, see www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs.

Useful links

- The SR series of advice sheets are available at www.coshh-essentials.org.uk/ under Direct advice topics for Service industries

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.