

**SSOW 13 - Safe System of Work: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health  
(COSHH)**

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**1. Activity**

This Safe System of Work covers any material, mixture or compound used at work or arising from work activities. It covers chemicals and products containing chemicals.

This SSOW also covers fumes, dusts, vapours, mists and gases and biological agents that cause diseases such as leptospirosis or legionnaires' disease.

COSHH doesn't cover lead, asbestos or radioactive substances because these have their own specific regulations.

**2. Persons at Risk**

Management, technical and administrative staff  
Drivers  
Loaders  
Contractors  
Public

**3. Hazards**

Hazardous Substances  
Exhaust fumes  
Cigarette smoke  
Legionnaires  
Dust in baling shed  
Biological agents

#### 4. Procedures

##### a) Prevention of exposure at source

- *Identify*: Information from suppliers, including supplier safety data sheets, will be used to identify whether the substance is hazardous
- *Eliminate or Substitute*: When considering substances to be used at work consideration will be given to avoiding the use of hazardous substances if an alternative process or if a non hazardous alternative can be used to achieve the work satisfactorily
- *Assessment*: If it is not possible to avoid using a hazardous substance then an assessment will be carried out. This will consider such issues as risks, hazards, level of exposure, controls, storage, and the need for health surveillance, monitoring, engineering and personal protective equipment

##### b) Good Control Practice

- *Control*: Processes and activities will be designed to minimise emission, release and spread of substances hazardous to health. Consideration of all relevant routes of exposure – inhalation, skin absorption and ingestion – when developing control measures.
- *PPE*: Where adequate control of exposure cannot be achieved by other means, provide, in combination with other control measures, suitable Personal Protective Equipment.
- *Inform*: all employees will be informed and trained on the hazards and risks from the substances they work with and the use of control measures developed to minimise the risks.
- *Storage*: Substances hazardous to health should be stored in a secure area to prevent any unauthorised person coming into contact with them

#### 5. General Guidance

- Warning Symbols: Hazardous substances are usually identified by hazard warning symbols on the container or packaging as illustrated



Toxic or Very Toxic



Harmful or Irritant



**Corrosive**

- Substances displaying hazard symbols can be inhaled or absorbed through the skin and cause ill health and therefore it is essential that they are only used if:
  - employees have been given information on the substances and necessary instruction
  - employees are wearing the appropriate PPE
- Never mix two substances together, unless instructed and it is safe to do so
- Never use samples left by supplier's representatives until a COSHH assessment has been carried out
- Always store substances correctly, in labelled containers, with the container lid on

## **6. Personal Protective Equipment**

- All employees, including those from agencies, will be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment considered necessary

## **7. Medical Requirements / Vaccinations**

- Employees must always report to the Supervisor if feeling unwell after using a hazardous substance
- If employees handle clinical or infectious waste they may be required to be immunised against Tetanus and Hepatitis B. This must be offered free of charge. A specific COSHH assessment would be carried out on such waste

## **8. Training**

- Safe Systems of Work training will be provided in monthly Briefing sessions. Employees will be informed about the COSHH Regulations, aware of the hazard warning signs and the hazards in the Collections service e.g. exhaust fumes, diesel, dust, clinical waste, cigarette smoke, etc
- Supervisors will ensure that employees and agency staff, know the safe system of work before using or being exposed to any substance and will provide any necessary training

<b>Related Documents</b>	
	<b>Reference:</b>
<b>Risk Assessments</b>	
Waste Collection	WC1
Vehicle Washing	WC2
Fly Tipping	WC4
Induction	WC7
Operations within the depots	WC9
<b>COSHH Assessment</b>	
Fleetsafe	22.11.2012
Ad Blue	09.02.2010
<b>Procedures</b>	
Procedure for Managing Fly Tipped Waste	P03
Issue of PPE	P18
Agency Staff: PPE issue	P07
Staff Induction – Waste Collections	P08
Agency Induction	P09
<b>Safe Systems Of Work</b>	
General Requirements Waste Collection	SSOW 01
Personal Protective Equipment	SSOW 04
Washing of Vehicles	SSOW 05
Refuelling Vehicles	SSOW 08
Clinical Waste Collection	SSOW 09
Avoidance of Needlestick Injuries	SSOW 15