

Hazardous Substances – **General**

08.01.09

## Exposure control &gt;

**This is one of a series of information bulletins which, have been written to assist the employer to manage risks associated with hazardous substances. The bulletins make up a package, which reflects the Australian Safety and Compensation Council's ([ASCC](#)) approach to managing workplace hazardous substances, which is currently being adopted throughout Australia.**

**Prohibited substances**

The [Workplace Health and Safety Regulations](#) prohibit the use of some substances in certain work processes (Regulation 69 - Prohibition of scheduled substances for specific purposes, Schedule 7 - Substances prohibited for specific purposes). Contact NT WorkSafe for information regarding these prohibited substances.

**Employer's duty to prevent or control exposure**

Employers must take action to either prevent exposure of persons to hazardous substances in the workplace or to minimise their exposure by implementing adequate control measures.

For some hazardous substances Exposure Standards have been set for airborne contaminants. When practicable, levels of exposure should be maintained to below these exposure standards.

**The hierarchy of controls**

When making decisions about what controls to implement, the Hierarchy of Controls measures should be applied when possible.

- elimination - remove hazardous substances which are not essential.
- substitution - use less hazardous substance, (water based glue instead of an organic glue), or the same substance in a less hazardous process (dipping items instead of spray coating them).
- isolation - separate processes from people by distance or by barriers, for example spray painting inside a spray booth.
- engineering - use machinery, equipment or processes that minimise workplace contamination by containing or removing hazardous substances. For example, use local exhaust ventilation to remove hazardous fumes.
- administration - change the way people do the job or have procedures about how to do the job safely, rotate workers through jobs to reduce overall exposure and provide proper supervision to workers using hazardous substances.

putting safety first &gt;



- Personal Protective Equipment - wear personal protective equipment or clothing that is suitable for the type of substance being used. This equipment must be individually fitted and workers trained in the correct use and maintenance.
- Monitoring and Maintenance of Control Measures - all control measures must be regularly monitored and maintained. This includes testing of engineering systems, testing for airborne contaminants, (usually done by an occupational hygienist) and ensuring personal protective equipment is properly stored, replaced and maintained.
- Where results of monitoring show that a worker's exposure is approaching unsafe levels, immediate action should be taken to reduce the health hazard by improving control measures.

## **NT WorkSafe >**

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