

Take control

17.06.01

Chemicals and other substances

Contact with a chemical or substance >

This information bulletin has been produced to assist in the prevention of workplace injury and disease. By identifying causes and assessing and controlling risks you can take control of health and safety in your workplace.

Risk indicators in the workplace

Some things to look for include:

- Employees required to enter a new environment, or places such as confined spaces, wells and so on, without safety checks first being carried out to ascertain the presence of chemicals or hazardous substances;
- Spills of hazardous substances or dangerous goods on roadways and worksites;
- Clearing spills of unknown chemicals;
- Clearing spills of hazardous substances or dangerous goods without the right personal protective gear, such as respirators and overalls;
- Working with highly toxic substances without the use of fume hoods, ventilation, personal protective equipment and other forms of protection.

Examples of what can be done to stop such occurrences from happening

Employers should, for example, make sure that:

- All hazardous substance and dangerous goods containers are well labelled so that employees can clearly identify them;
- Material Safety Data Sheets are obtained from suppliers or manufacturers of chemicals used on your premises.
- Barriers are used to isolate spills from employees;
- Ventilation extraction systems are in place to reduce, contain or limit the spread of hazardous substances;
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is available and kept well maintained;
- A chemical log which summarises the types, amounts and locations of chemicals is maintained and emergency services are able to access it in an emergency;
- Training in safe handling procedures is provided (for example, how to hold and use a knife to cut different materials).

putting safety first >



To find out more

The [Workplace Health and Safety Act](#) and the [Workplace Health and Safety Regulations](#) outline the minimum standards and the process to manage occupational health and safety in your workplace.

Specific regulations to note in respect of this topic are:

[Dangerous Goods Regulations](#)

Regulation 13 General Precautions
Regulation 15 D G in Unsafe Conditions
Regulation 16 Equipment for Use

[Workplace Health and Safety Regulations](#)

Regulation 42 Health Surveillance
Regulation 43 Information Instruction and Training
Regulation 58 Exposure to Certain Risks
Regulation 71 Personal Protective Equipment

[Dealing with Chemical Safety](#)

The [National Standard for the Storage and Handling of Workplace Dangerous Goods](#) is incorporated into the Dangerous Goods Regulations and should be read in conjunction with the Regulations.

[Australian Standards](#) are available from the Territory Construction Association, phone 8922 9666. Australian Standards can be viewed online by visiting the Northern Territory Library, Parliament House, phone 8999 7177.

Australian Standards applicable to this topic include:

[AS 2507](#) The storage and handling of agricultural and veterinary chemicals

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