

Toolbox Talk Details

Title	B14 - COSHH
Reason	Hazardous substances can be used in, or created by, construction processes. Using hazardous substances without the proper controls in place can damage your health.
Outline	This talk covers risk assessment, hazards, control measures and safe use of substances.

Risk assessment

1. A competent person must carry out a risk assessment to decide whether:
 - a less hazardous substance can be used instead
 - exposure to a substance can be avoided
 - alternative work methods can reduce exposure
2. Many of the substances used in construction have the potential to cause harm.

Hazards

1. Hazardous substances can enter the body in four ways. These are known as routes of entry and are:
 - ingestion – eating food contaminated with the hazardous substance
 - inhalation – breathing in harmful dust or fumes
 - injection – sharp objects or high-pressure fluids
 - absorption – chemicals entering through cuts.
2. Examples of hazardous substances on construction sites include contaminated ground, cement, hardwood dust, concrete admixtures, solvent fumes, resins, epoxy-based paints, welding fumes and asbestos.
3. Do not mix chemicals or substances unless you are following a safe and authorised process.

Control measures

1. Follow your employer's safe system of work and the risk (COSHH) assessment for each substance.
2. When using hazardous substances, wear the correct personal protective equipment (PPE), if required.
3. Know how to look after and use your PPE correctly.
4. Ensure hazardous substances are put back into a secure location after use. Do not leave them on site.

Safe use of substances

1. Make sure you are trained to use hazardous substances.
2. Comply with the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) assessment and the instructions on the product label.
3. Do not eat, drink or smoke when handling substances.
4. Do not expose others to fumes, dust, gas or other dangers from hazardous substances.

5. Wash your hands when you have finished using a product, before using another product, before eating or smoking and at the end of your shift.

Revision Date	Assessed By	Signature
January 2021	Michael Reddan	