

CONTROL BANDING

ADVICE FOR WORKERS

How can the Controlling Chemical Hazards Web Project and Guideline help you?

There are two main factors which affect whether chemicals in the workplace are likely to harm health:

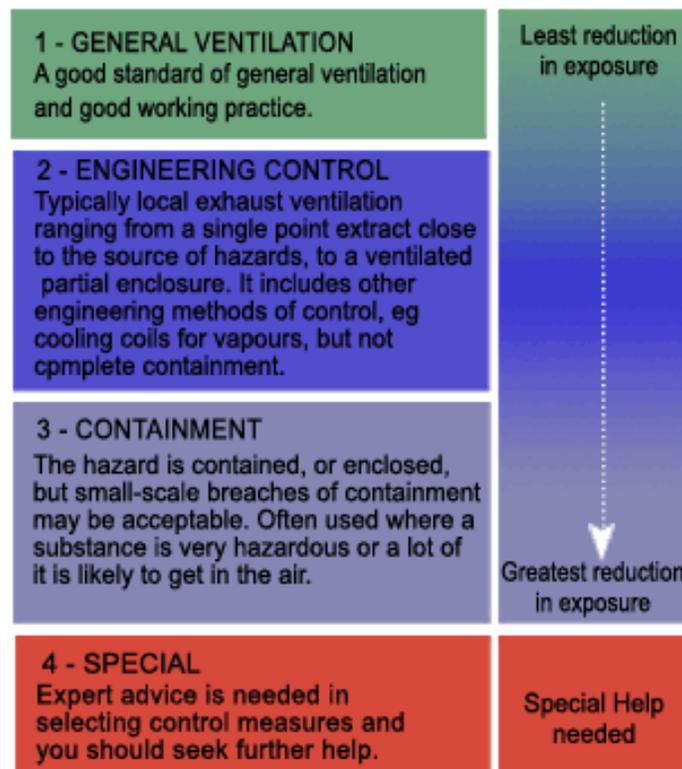
- » the type of damage the chemical causes and the amount needed to cause that damage; and
- » how much is likely to get into the air and be breathed in or come into contact with the skin or eyes.

This in turn depends upon its dustiness or its ability to produce vapors or gases in air.

The Controlling Chemical Hazards guideline and web project uses this information and chemical information gathered from safety data sheets and other sources information to select one of four control approaches (bands). Control guidance sheets are then produced that provide information on what you need to do to work safely with the specific chemicals at hand.

What are Control Bands?

The Controlling Chemical Hazards guideline and web project recommends four control approaches that depend on the need reduce worker exposure because of a chemical's potential to harm health (see GS General Guidance).



Why Control Hazardous Substances?

Hazardous substances - which include chemicals - can harm health if they are used wrongly. Using them safely means protecting people from breathing in too much and keeping chemicals off the skin.

Proper control:

- » helps stop you and your coworkers from being off sick;
- » helps stop you and your coworkers from getting diseases or chemical injuries; and
- » helps you comply with the law.

What will the Controlling Chemical Hazards Guideline and Web Project give me and my Supervisor?

When you or your supervisor has followed this system through to the end, you will be able to print;

- » Control guidance sheets that explain what level of control is right for you. These also list other simple practical steps to help you keep to the law.
- » A system record as evidence of how you and your supervisor made your risk assessment.

The Controlling Chemical Hazards System also offers advice where chemicals can cause harm if they contact the skin or eyes.

If you are using the more hazardous chemicals you are prompted to think about substituting them or using them in a safer form (e.g., pellets rather than powder).

Where do I go get information needed for the Controlling Chemical Hazards Guideline or Web Project?

First, you really need an up-to-date safety data sheet.

The supplier must send your employer data sheets with your first consignment for single chemicals and for mixtures if these are “Controlled Products” under WHMIS.

If the chemical or mixture is produced at your work place, your employer is responsible for providing you with a safety data sheet.

Sometimes the chemicals or mixtures are changing because of processes at the worksite; in this case your employer will need to use process information and the results of chemical testing to find the components in the mixture you are working with.

What do I do with the information I get from the Controlling Chemical Hazards Guideline or Web Project?

Use the control guidance sheets to:

- » select the right control approach for the way you are using the chemical(s);
- » determine if extra precautions (skin protection) or (respiratory protection) are required in addition to other controls;
- » determine if you need extra information or training to get the work done safely; and
- » check that everything necessary to protect workers is in place before you begin the job.

BEFORE WORKING WITH CHEMICAL HAZARDS

- Ensure that you have the material safety data sheet available for each chemical.
- Work with your supervisor to use the Controlling Chemical Hazards guideline or web project to print control guidance sheets for the work at hand.
- Make sure that all the safety equipment required by the guidance sheets available at the work site.
- Make sure that you have been trained on how to use and inspect the equipment you will be using.
- Inspect the condition of engineering controls (e.g. ventilation equipment) to make sure it's in good working order before you start work.