HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

This pack includes a guide to managing the risks associated with hazardous chemicals, a checklist to help identify the overall risk factors and a risk register to record the identified risks and agreed control measures.

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HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Step 1: Identify hazardous chemical risks

Identify tasks with potential risk through:

- Identification of all chemicals used, handled, stored or generated at the workplace and ensure they are listed in an inventory to form a part of the hazardous chemicals register
- Determine the hazard classification and relevant routes of entry into the body for all chemicals identified. This can usually be identified from the labels or safety data sheets
- **Identify which workers are at risk of exposure to hazardous chemicals**
- **Identify worker's tasks where exposure to hazardous chemicals is evident**

Step 2: Prioritise tasks for each action

- Review the likelihood and severity of injury or illness that could be caused
- Prioritise tasks with exposure to hazardous chemicals based upon the nature of the chemical itself and the frequency and duration of exposure

Step 3: Assess hazardous chemical risks

- For each task indicate if the risk factors are present
- Prioritise the tasks for action by reviewing the likelihood of injury and severity or potential consequences of injury as per the table below
- Using the risk matrix below as a guide, write a priority rating low, medium, or high for each task in the hazardous chemical risk control register table. High being the highest priority

RISK RANK MATRIX		CONSEQUENCES				
		Marginal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	Almost Certain	Medium	Medium	High	High	High
	Likely	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Possible	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

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HIGH Risk	MEDIUM Risk	LOW Risk
Immediate attention, response and treatment required to eliminate or control the risk prior to commencement or continuation of work. Do not recommence until effective controls are implemented and workers demonstrate competencies in new control measures	Only proceed with great care and only if essential. Current controls must be reviewed, revised and documented as necessary to reduce the risk level before work recommences and workers have demonstrated competency in new control measures	Manage by routine procedures and/or existing controls. Controls require a regular monitor and review process to ensure continued effectiveness. Further control measures should be implemented to reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable. Ensure all workers are effectively trained to undertake their job safely

Likelihood		Consequences	
Almost Certain	Expected to occur in most circumstances	**Marginal**	No injury or minor first aid treatment only
Likely	Has occurred before and will probably occur in most circumstances	**Minor**	First aid treatment or precautionary medical attention only, and person likely to immediately resume normal duties
Possible	Might occur occasionally and could happen	**Moderate**	Multiple injuries, and person unable to resume normal duties in the short-medium term
Unlikely	Could possibly occur at some time	**Major**	Hospitalisation with potential to result in permanent impairment
Rare	Is practically impossible but may occur in exceptional circumstances	**Severe**	Fatality or permanent injury or illness

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Step 4: Control hazardous chemical risks

Eliminate the need to use, handle, store or generate the chemical risk by:

- **Using a mechanical or physical process instead of a chemical process**
- **eg using ultrasound to clean equipment instead of a process involving chemicals**
- **Using clips/bolts or nails instead of adhesive**

OR, in order of priority

Substitution:

- Substitute with a less volitile chemical
- Substitute a highly flammable chemical with a less flammable or combustable chemical
- Substitue multiple hazard class chemicals with a single hazard class chemical
- Substitute high hazard chemicals such as carcinogens with less hazardous chemicals
- Use diluted chemicals rather than concentrates
- Use products in either paste or pellet form rather than as a dust or powder
- Substitute with a safer form or process eg paint with a brush or apply with a roller instead of spraying

Isolation of workers from hazardous chemicals:

- Use of enclosures with exhaust extractions to remove contaminants
- Isolate operations and restrict access to properly protected personnel
- Place operators in positive presssure cabins that prevent entry of contaminants
- Distance workers from hazardous chemicals and any potential hazards generated by their use

Isolation of hazardous chemicals from other hazardous chemicals:

- Physically separate hazardous chemicals from chemicals or other things that may be incompatible through distance, barriers or a combination of both

Engineering controls:

- Use of local exhaust ventilation
- Use of ventilated spray booths or fume cupboards
- Use of intrinsically safe electrcal equipment in hazardous areas

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Administrative controls: ***(for use only when higher order controls are not practicable and/ or in conjunction with higher order controls where the higher order controls alone did not control the risk)***

- Development and use of safe work procedures and safe work practices
- Control exposure time to hazardous chemicals
- Reduced storage quantities of hazardous chemicals
- Staffing – using only designated staff
- Prohibiting eating, drinking and smoking in potentially contaminated areas
- Provison of washing facilities for rinsing off chemicals (hand washing, safety showers, laundering)

Personal protective equipment (PPE): (*for use only where all other reasonably praticable control measures have been used and risk is still present or used as an interim measure only)*

- Must be suitable and appropriate for the nature of work and any associated hazards
- Must be effectively maintained
- Use must be supported with effective training and appropriate level of supervsion

Emergency planning:

- Develop and impliment suitable and effective emergency response plans that includes appropriate fire protection and fire fighting equipment and accounts for catastophic chemical or substance spills, leaks or chemical reactions
- Provide suitable, appropriate and effective first aid kit and spill containment systems in each part of the workplace where a hazardous chemical is used, handled, stored or generated
- Spill containment system procedures must describe how to contain, cleanup and dispose of spill or leak

Storage and disposal:

- Ensure hazardous chemicals are stored in accordance with the information contained on the safety data sheet in relation to chemical compatibility and classifications
- Ensure waste hazardous chemicals are disposed of appropriately and in accordance with safety data information and/or relavent regulations and codes

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Overcoming barriers in controlling hazardous chemical risks:

- Put in short term suitable control measures whilst you are seeking funding or awaiting an action on long term controls
- Ensure the work group agrees with the planned controls and understand the supervisor has the responsibility to ensure the work is conducted safely
- Determine and notify the work group of consequences if safe work practices or controls are not used
- Confirm the level of funding you are able to authorise independently for control measures
- Where controls exceed your funding authority, provide this risk assessment checklist with your specific request for funds
- Senior managers take responsibility for authorising costs and the duty of care where the line manager has done all within their power to control risks
- For high priority risks, line managers should follow up weekly with senior managers for a decision
- Some controls may need significant future budget allocation or proposals submitted to executive management

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