



Chemicals and ‘hazardous substances’

‘Hazardous substances’ are substances that meet a definition under the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996. They are substances that can have a direct health effect on people and include some dusts, fibres, gases, vapours, smoke, fumes and chemicals. This checklist covers both requirements for hazardous substances under the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 and general chemical safety.

safety checklist

Check	yes	no	n/a
Register of hazardous substances			
Is there a complete list of all hazardous substances?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there up to date MSDSs for each hazardous substance in the workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all MSDSs in the Hazardous Substances Register?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Hazardous Substances Register readily available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Labels			
Do all original containers have manufacturers' labels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all decanted containers labelled with name, risk and safety phrases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessment			
Have the risks from all chemicals and hazardous substances stored and used at the workplace been assessed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have the risk assessments been recorded in the Hazardous Substances Register?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are risk assessment reports available where risks are significant?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk controls			
Have steps been taken to adequately control risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the 'hierarchy of controls' (preferred order of controls) been considered when selecting controls? That is, firstly consider eliminating the chemical and, if not practicable, choose a safer one or use ventilation near the work where possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have controls been inspected and maintained? For example, has air flow been checked in ventilation systems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there appropriate first aid and emergency facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training			
Have all people who may be exposed to chemicals and hazardous substances been given information and training before starting work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the records of training include health effects, controls, safe work methods and personal protective equipment/clothing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health surveillance			
Have you initiated health surveillance of workers' health where there is a risk? This is a requirement for work with lead, isocyanates, asbestos, organophosphate insecticides and other substances listed in Schedule 5.3 of the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where health surveillance is required, has a medical practitioner been appointed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asbestos Register			
For workplaces with asbestos materials present, is there a current asbestos register for the workplace? See also the Asbestos checklist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other information

WorkSafe www.worksafe.wa.gov.au

Legislation

- The Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996

Codes of practice

- Management and control of asbestos [NOHSC: 2018]
- Control and safe use of inorganic lead at work [NOHSC: 2015]
- Control of workplace hazardous substances [NOHSC: 2007]
- Labelling of workplace substances [NOHSC: 2012]
- Code of practice: Spray painting
- Code of practice: Styrene

Guidance notes

- Assessment of health risks from hazardous substances [NOHSC: 3017]
- Controlling isocyanate hazards at work
- Material safety data sheets (MSDS)
- Occupational safety and health management and contaminated sites
- Prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning
- Safe use of chemicals in the woodworking industry
- Soldering in the workplace – rosin fluxes

Safe Work Australia website www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

Code of practice

- Safe use of ethylene oxide in sterilisation/fumigation [NOHSC: 2008]

Guides

- Controlling risks associated with electroplating

Database

- Hazardous Substances Information System (a database with information on hazardous substances)

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