**TOOLBOX TALK 18**

**HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS**

Many workplace activities involve the use of substances which could harm our health unless precautions are taken. Common substances such as chemicals cement, adhesives, solvents, cleaning materials, etc, all pose a risk.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act – Hazardous Chemicals Substances Regulation, place duties on employers and employees. They set out a sensible step-by-step approach for the control of hazardous substances and for protecting people exposed to them.

#### Key Points

* Substances have to be assessed: categories include very-toxic, toxic, harmful, irritant, corrosive, flammable etc.
* Manufacturers and suppliers must provide information (Safety Data Sheets), when asked to enable assessments to be done.
* Employers have to introduce control measures appropriate to their own assessment.
* Best control measure is – use something else instead which is less hazardous or non-hazardous.
* Last resort control measure is – provide PPE i.e., gloves, goggles, overalls, etc.
* Your employer must inform and instruct operatives about the risks and provide training on the precautions to be taken. The assessment must be to hand during chemical use, normally in the Site Office.
* You employer must monitor the use of the substance and check that controls are adequate and if necessary arrange medical checks for workers.
* Employees legally must use any control measures provided. Use any PPE provided, in the way it was intended, use any washing, changing, eating accommodation provided, in the way it was intended.
* Employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others. Read labels on packaging and follow the instructions carefully.
* Employees must tell their supervisor immediately if you are unsure about a substance or if you have a health problem.



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| **Date** |  | **Presented By** |  |
| **Time** |  | **Project (If Applicable)** |  |
| Acknowledgement | I hereby acknowledge that I have received and understand the attached Toolbox Talk. I accept the responsibility of implementing it in my section and ensuring that all relevant line personnel within my area of responsibility are informed and comply accordingly. Any person relieving me or taking over my area of responsibility will also be informed accordingly by myself. |
| **Name** | **Surname** | **Signature** |
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