

Health & Safety Matters

March 2016

WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Chemical Substance Safety

When purchasing / acquiring chemical substances always consider the following before you complete the acquisition.

Pre-acquisition assessment: Review the [Safety Data Sheet](#)

- Do you need the materials?
- Can the job be done in another manner which does not involve chemicals, or using materials which are inherently less hazardous?

Where you decide the chemical substances are needed:

- Do you have the [appropriate facilities](#) to store the material?
- Do you have suitable facilities to use the material safely?
- Are there arrangements in place to deal with the waste and bi-products, and any foreseeable emergencies involving that material?

Ensure a suitable risk assessment of the activity involving the use of the substance is carried out before its use and any control measures identified are acted upon.



Eye Wash Bottles

Where mains tap water is not readily available, and there is a risk of eye injury, then emergency eye wash bottles must be made readily available.

Where they are provided, they must be:

- In date and replaced by expiry date
- Sealed
- Used / partially used bottles disposed of and replaced.



The eye wash bottle provides emergency wash to give you time to get a mains fed eye wash. A minimum of 15 minutes running water is recommended.

Fire Safety & Flammable Solvents etc.

When using or storing flammable or explosive materials, a risk assessment is required. Where you need to store more than 50 litres of highly flammable, 250 litres of flammable solvents, or intend to use/store potentially unstable explosive material, then a specific [DSEAR assessment](#) is required.

Generally, the use of small quantities of flammable / highly flammable solvents will be covered by the general assessment of the activity to be carried out. When scaling up the reaction to larger quantities or using explosive materials, a specific assessment is required which details the controls to be followed.

Lighting in Offices

An office should be a well-lit space in which to work. The lighting must meet a minimum level of illuminance (lux) to meet the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.



The Estates Department are capable of measuring the lux levels in an office environment and will follow the requirements of relevant codes to confirm that an area is sufficiently lit. If an area meets this requirement, there is no need to provide additional lighting.

Alteration of the existing lighting provision must not take place without consent of the Estates Department.

Further information on office lighting is available on the H&S Website, under '[Lighting Guidance for Offices](#)'

Solvent Wash Bottles

Vented varieties help to reduce leakage from the spout and all wash bottles offer safe ways of handling small amounts of solvent rather than the stock bottle.

Ensure:-

- Bottles are appropriately labelled for content.
 - Never use unlabelled bottles
 - Wash bottles must not be used for corrosive substances
- Maximum capacity of 500ml per bottle, max of 5 bottles per laboratory.
- Bottles are kept in appropriate storage cabinet when not in use during that day.
- Bottles are stored on drip trays when out on bench and returned to appropriate cabinet at night.



Manual Handling

During 2015 Learning & Development, in conjunction with Health & Safety, ran two successful 'Manual Handling - Train the Trainer' (City & Guilds) courses. Participants who attended the training achieved a qualification which enabled them to go out into their workplace and deliver bespoke manual handling training to other employees. A further course is planned for the coming summer vacation. Managers wishing to nominate appropriate staff should register their names via the [H&S Helpdesk](#). The Health & Safety Department will support the generation of material to permit future training to be carried out in-house by those that successfully complete the training.

The need to move things, whether this to lift, hold, push, pull or carry something whether in or out of work can lead to a significant impact on our health if it is done incorrectly. Follow [this link](#) for further guidance. This includes a link to an initial assessment tool designed to support those who need to consider this risk as part of a work activity.

Useful links

[Report all incidents and near misses](#)

[Health & Safety webpages](#)

[Need advice on health & safety](#)