



# Policy – Safe Use of Chemicals

## 1. Introduction

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended) is intended to prevent workplace disease and illness resulting from exposure to hazardous substances. The Regulations introduce a control framework by requiring an adequate assessment of the risks to health arising from work activities associated with hazardous substances - the introduction of adequate control measures, maintenance of the measures and equipment associated with them, monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures and the health of employees.

Using hazardous substances can put people's health at risk. COSHH requires employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to protect both employees and others who may be exposed from work activities.

The Regulations apply to a wide range of substances and preparations with the potential to cause harm if they are inhaled, ingested, injected or absorbed through the skin. Substances hazardous to health occur in many forms including dusts liquids, vapours, gases, mists, fibres, solids and smoke

Any substance used, produced or that employees are exposed to in the workplace should be assessed under COSHH Regulations to determine whether there is a potential harmful effect.

Substances that MUST be assessment under COSHH Regulations are;

- Any substance or mixtures of substances classified as dangerous and carry warning labels such as Toxic, Very Toxic, Harmful,
- Corrosive, Irritant, Sensitizing or Carcinogenic;
- Any substance with a Workplace Exposure Limit.
- Any biological agent (bacteria, blood and other micro-organisms);

The chemicals normally used in the Church and Centre are those used for cleaning and washing and are generally domestic type products.

Where these domestic type products carry a square orange warning symbol, the instructions for use and disposal carried on the product will be followed, and a formal COSHH assessment will not be required.

### Important Note

The exception to this rule is the dishwasher detergent; this is an R35 type liquid and can cause severe burns. A full COSHH assessment has been carried out and a safe system of work applies. Only the Church Operations Manager, Church Wardens or Receptionist/Administrator are permitted to change the fluids

Bleaching agents will be avoided wherever possible and choices made of products which are environmentally friendly.

### PCC Responsibilities

Managers have the responsibility to ensure that

- All hazardous substances used have been identified, and that the Health and Safety Advisor is aware of these

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substances.

- No hazardous substance is to be used or stored on the premises that do not have a COSHH assessment.
- COSHH assessments have been carried out for each hazardous substance and are reviewed annually  
COSHH assessments are documented and are available, and that safety procedures identified in the assessment are rigorously followed
- All employees receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision as required so that they are aware of the risks to health created by their exposure to hazardous substances and the precautions that must be taken. Specific information on potentially hazardous substances should be included in the local induction of new staff.
- Ensure that access to the chemical store is minimised and always locked.

### **The Employee's Responsibilities**

All employees have the general duty to co-operate with the PCC to ensure that it meets the legal responsibilities detailed in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the COSHH regulations. These duties are to ensure that control measures, manufacturer's guidance, safety procedures and safe systems of work are followed and that you ensure that you are familiar with the precautions that you might need to take in the event of an emergency involving the substance

### **Additional responsibilities for employees that purchase substances**

As well as the general employee's responsibilities, employees that purchase substances have additional responsibilities. These are to ensure that:

- Any substance that has not been purchased previously is identified to the Health and Safety Operations Manager
- The supplier of the substance provides a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for the substance.

### **External Contractors Responsibilities**

Before commencement of any work by external contractors, the staff member responsible for the project, work and or contractor, will ensure that the contractor supplies all relevant data sheets and that the contractors have carried out and supplied a copy of any relevant COSHH and risk assessment.

Contractors will be responsible for the safe, offsite storage, of any chemicals needed for their work. No chemicals shall be left on church premises unless prior arrangement and agreement has been made with the Church Operations Manager.

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<b>No</b>	<b><i>Policy Document Change History</i></b>	<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Who</i></b>
1	Approved list of those allowed to change dishwasher fluids added	14/03/08	RP
N	Initial release	06/02/08	RP