

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This Statement sets out the policy of John Weaver (Contractors) Ltd. (the Company) in respect of any employee, self-employed person and contractor under our control whose health and safety may be affected as a result of working, or otherwise coming into contact with, hazardous substances. Its intention is to assist in protecting our personnel whilst at work and to assist the Company in fulfilling its legal and moral obligations.
- 1.2** Provided that persons referred to in 1.1 above adhere to the provisions and precautions contained within this policy and its supporting documentation, they will normally be able to work safely and without undue risk to their health. They will also be considered to have demonstrated compliance with their Conditions of Employment, or contract, (written or implied) insofar as they refer to the use of hazardous substances.
- 1.3** All persons referred to in 1.1 above are to be made aware of the contents of this Policy and its supporting documentation and must become familiar with the conditions and precautions laid down. A copy of the Policy will be available at each place of work or at Head Office. Personal copies of the Policy may be obtained on request from Head Office.

2. Definitions

- 2.1** In this Policy, the expression 'at work' means whenever and wherever work takes place and may include travel for work (for instance travel between premises, sites, to and from meetings etc.). Travel from home to work and from work to home is not included in this definition.
- 2.2** The term 'legal obligations' refers to the statutory duties laid down principally in the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, but also in supporting legislation brought under the Act from time to time.
- 2.3** The term 'substance hazardous to health' is defined in detail within the current edition of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. For the purposes of this Policy however, it shall be defined as 'any substance, whether natural or artificial, solid or liquid, gas or vapour, or micro-organism which has the potential to create harm to the health or safety of a person'.
- 2.4** The term 'health surveillance' is defined within the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations. Its purpose is to detect problems with the health of employees as early as is practicable in order that damage to health can be prevented. Suitable health surveillance will depend on the risk and may require input from a medical practitioner, occupational nurse or other qualified person. Simple surveillance (such as inspections for dermatitis of the hands) may be carried out 'in-house' by a suitably responsible person.

3. Policy

- 3.1** The Company will take all reasonable measures to ensure that those persons referred to in 1.1 above are made aware of the contents of this Policy, the possible effects upon their personal health and safety and the possible consequences of any breach of this Policy.

- 3.2** The Company recognises its obligations under all relevant sections of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the various duties and obligations under the current edition of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations and associated legislation and will take all reasonable measures to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any breach of duty placed upon the Company by legislation and/or this Policy.
- 3.3** All employees of the Company will, at all times, exercise diligence in ensuring that this policy is adhered to. Responsibilities of individuals are determined by their grade of employment as detailed elsewhere in this Policy.
- 3.4** It is the policy of the Company that, prior to any employee using a substance harmful to health or carrying out a work activity during which they may generate or otherwise come into contact with such a substance, a suitable and sufficient assessment is carried out for the purposes of identifying measures which may be taken to eliminate, reduce or otherwise control the hazard.
- 3.5** Control measures will be selected using one or more measures selected from the following hierarchic list:-
- i. Change the process or activity so that the substance is not needed or generated;
 - ii. Replace the substance with a safer alternative (e.g. use softwood rather than hardwood);
 - iii. Use the substance but in a safer form (e.g. pellets not powder, liquid not aerosol);
 - iv. Enclose the process;
 - v. Partially enclose the process and use local exhaust ventilation;
 - vi. Provide general ventilation;
 - vii. Use systems of work which minimise risk of leaks and spillages etc.
 - viii. Reduce the number of persons exposed to the substance;
 - ix. Provide personal protective equipment (PPE).
- 3.6** Health surveillance will be provided for all employees in the following circumstances:-
- i. Where a COSHH assessment has determined that a need for health surveillance exists;
 - ii. An employee is exposed to any of the substances listed in Schedules accompanying the current edition of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, but only where the exposure occurs in connection with a process listed in the same schedule;
 - iii. Where the exposure of the employee to a hazardous substance is such that:
 - a. an identifiable disease or adverse health effect may be related to the exposure;
 - b. there is a reasonable likelihood that the disease or effect may occur under the particular working conditions.
- 3.7** If any doubt exists over whether health surveillance is necessary, assistance will be sought from the Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS).

4. Supporting Documentation

- 4.1** Additional information has been prepared in order to assist in adhering to this Policy. Reference should therefore be made to the following groups of documents:-
- i. **Documents directly associated with this Policy**
This document should be read in conjunction with the general policy statement for health and safety and its associated information.
 - ii. **Health & Safety information**
Information about substances harmful to health and guidance on the control measures required for certain substances. The guidance is provided by way of schedules which list the substance, the nature of the hazard, the primary control measures and (where appropriate) special instructions for first aid.
 - iii. **Forms and miscellaneous items**
Standard forms are used for various aspects of health and safety management, including the control of substances hazardous to health. These include such items as COSHH assessments (both generic and specific) and safety data sheets.

5. Policy Review

- 5.1** This Policy and its associated documentation will be reviewed after changes in legislation, changes in the structure of the Company and in the light of additional knowledge or information becoming available.

6. Responsibility for policy implementation

- 6.1** The overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is vested in the Board of Directors.
- 6.2** Responsibilities for different management grades are detailed in accompanying documentation.



Terry Edwards
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John Weaver Contractors Limited
November April 2020