

**OVERVIEW**

This Safety Practice describes the practice to control the hazard / impact posed by Hazardous Substances.

In accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2020, an employer shall, so far as is practicable, provide and maintain a working environment in which his employees are not exposed to hazards existing in the workplace. This requirement includes the hazards associated with hazardous substances. There are also general duties for employees under the Act that require them to protect themselves and others from injury as a result of interactions with hazardous substances.

The responsible person must identify the hazards associated with hazardous substances, assess the risks of injury or harm to a person resulting from each hazard, if any, and consider the means by which the risk may be reduced. Specific regulatory requirements relating to hazardous substances are contained in Part 7 of the Regulations.

Hazardous substances are chemicals and other substances that can affect your health, causing illness or disease. They may be solvents, pesticides, paints, adhesives, petroleum products, lead, heavy metals or any other substance that is hazardous to health and is used or produced at work. Hazardous substances can take many forms – liquids, solids, vapours, gases, fumes or dusts.

Hazardous substances can enter the body in different ways, namely:

- Inhalation;
- Absorption;
- Ingestion;
- Injection.

Health effects may be acute, resulting from a short-term exposure or chronic, resulting from long-term exposure over a period of time. Chronic effects may not occur for many years, they can be difficult to predict in advance and when they do occur it may be hard to identify the responsible exposure.

Additionally, from an environmental perspective, Perkins Builders has a legal obligation to not cause pollution or unreasonable emissions.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Management                   | Ensure adequate resources, systems and support are provided to manage hazardous substances safely in accordance with legislative requirements and this procedure.                                                                            |
| HSEQ Team                    | Provide guidance on hazardous substances management, support risk assessments, maintain the hazardous substances framework, and ensure compliance with SDS, storage and handling requirements.                                               |
| Site Manager / Supervisor    | Ensure hazardous substances are identified, assessed and controlled on site; verify SDS are available and current; ensure appropriate storage, signage and spill response equipment is in place; and monitor compliance with this procedure. |
| Workers                      | Follow safe work instructions, use hazardous substances in accordance with training and SDS, wear required PPE, report spills or exposures, and comply with all site controls.                                                               |
| Subcontractors               | Ensure all hazardous substances brought to site are correctly labelled and supported by current SDS; ensure their workers are trained and competent; and comply with Perkins Builders' hazardous substances requirements.                    |
| Suppliers (where applicable) | Provide compliant labelling and up-to-date Safety Data Sheets for all hazardous substances supplied to site.                                                                                                                                 |

**1. PURCHASING OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES****Guidance:**

All hazardous substances purchased for use by Perkins Builders personnel shall be labelled in accordance with the appropriate legislative requirements. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) shall be provided for all such materials.

Hazardous substances transferred from its original container shall be decanted and labelled correctly.

Prior to any Hazardous Substances being used on a project a subcontractor is to upload an electronic copy of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and an SDS Register for Site Manager review and acceptance on Hammertech. The subcontractor shall keep a current hard copy of the SDS for all substances in use or stored on site, at the site at all times, this is to be made available upon request. Risks associated with use, handling and or storage of a hazardous substance or dangerous good shall be documented within the task/activity SWMS/JHA and all workers shall be adequately trained in its use.

**2. REGISTER**

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**Guidance:**

An SDS register is available on the project Hammertech portal and shall identify product name and if the substance is classified as hazardous or dangerous and make reference to the relevant SDS.

SDS Registers shall include all substances or goods brought onto site by subcontractors and shall be maintained by the relevant subcontractor via Hammertech for the duration of its use on the project.

Hazardous substances and dangerous goods used and or stored within a Perkins facility shall be recorded in the Perkins Hazardous Substances and Dangerous Goods Register and maintained by the Site Manager in consultation with the HSE department.

**3. RISK ASSESSMENT****Guidance:**

All use of Hazardous Substances and or Dangerous Goods used or stored on Perkins premises (site or office) shall be identified in the relevant JHA/SWMS.

The outcome of the hazard identification and risk assessment shall be communicated to all employees and subcontractors who may be exposed to hazardous substances. All workers shall be trained in the use, handling and storage of the substance.

Workers shall review, understand and sign onto the relevant SWMS for the activity pertaining to the substances use.

**4. TRAINING****Guidance:**

Where required employees who may be exposed to hazardous substances will be adequately trained in at least the following:

- Hazard recognition.
- Handling of Hazardous Substances.
- Limits of exposure.
- Personal Protective Equipment to be used.
- Symptoms of exposure
- First aid and treatment for exposure

**5. HANDLING OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES****Guidance:**

In handling hazardous substances, Perkins Builders shall ensure that no employee or subcontractor shall be exposed to the designated limits of exposure as specified in the Workplace exposure standards for airborne contaminants (WES list)

A Job Hazard Analysis (JHA's/SWMS) may be prepared and implemented to cover the following:

- Incompatibility of substances when mixed, e.g. Mixing may result in a fire or an explosion;
- Precautions when pouring, decanting or transferring substances;
- Steps to be taken in the event of a spill or exposure; and
- Personal protective equipment to be used with certain substances.

Wherever possible, devices to ensure safe pouring of chemicals shall be utilised. Such devices shall bear the full weight of the container and allow safe control of the pouring operation, to avoid spills and splashes.

In addition, mixing of substances (liquid with liquid, powder with powder, powder with liquid, etc.) shall be carried out, whenever possible, within an enclosed space (container or pipe), to prevent the release of fumes or dust.

- Each site where hydrocarbons and chemicals will be used will be equipped with appropriate spill catchment facilities.
- Hydrocarbons and chemical handling activities will not be conducted in the vicinity of water bodies without permission of the Site Manager. Where such activities are necessary to occur a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) will be conducted prior to the activity.
- The Site Manager will be trained on spill response techniques and procedures.
- A spill kit will be available on site at all times.
- Oily waste will be segregated from general wastes and removed from site by an appropriate licensed contractor.
- Records will be maintained by the site manager for the disposal of waste hydrocarbons and chemicals.

**6. STORAGE**

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**Guidance:**

Hazardous Substances and Dangerous Goods shall be stored on site with consideration to the guideline controls listed within the Project Hazard Register and in accordance with the requirements described on the Safety Data Sheet (SDS)

The Site Manager or the relevant subcontractor is responsible for identifying all hydrocarbons and chemicals to be used on site.

The Site Manager shall not accept or allow for quantities beyond requirements and shall reduce quantities of chemical and hydrocarbons on site to a practical level as necessary.

Storage of hazardous substances will be as described on the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and containers shall be labelled in accordance with the Code of practice: Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals.

Where practicable flammable substances will be stored in a flammable storage cupboard.

Consideration shall be given to the classification of substances/goods and shall be stored as described on the SDS.

All storage shall be adequately ventilated, signage erected and fire suppression equipment available relevant to the substances being stored.

Drip trays and or bunding shall also be used to prevent spill and contamination of ground, mixing of substances and uncontrolled exposure.

**7. SPILL CLEAN UP****Guidance:**

All spills will be cleaned up immediately

**1. Control the spill**

If a spill occurs identify the source and assess whether it can be controlled (stopped) in a safe manner. Protect storm water drains and waterways by placing earth bund or absorbent material around storm water entrance points to prevent spill from entering storm water drains and waterways.

**2. Contain the spill**

Stop the spill from spreading using absorbent material, booms, earth bunding. The aim is to minimise the area requiring clean up.

**3. Clean Up the spill**

Remove absorbent material and ensure the surface is left clean. Materials used to clean up the spill should be placed in a container labelled "Spill Kit Waste".

When this container is full it should be removed from site as prescribed waste.

**8. SAFETY DATA SHEET (SDS)****Guidance:**

A Safety Data Sheet (SDS) shall be obtained for each product.

Purchasing procedures shall include a specific requirement to request and obtain the appropriate Safety Data Sheets from the supplier.

The relevant SDS's shall be made easily available to all personnel performing work, who may be exposed to such substances. This may be done by means of hard-copies or access via a computer.

SDS's shall be current (within 5 years from issue date) be maintained on site via the Hammertech online project portal.

**9. UPDATES AND RECORDS****Guidance:**

Arrangements shall be established to ensure all Safety Data Sheets are kept up-to-date and that whenever an SDS is updated, current copies are uploaded to the projects Hammertech online portal and copies provided to all relevant personnel.

Any SDS more than five years old shall be considered as invalid and an updated SDS shall be provided/obtained.

**10. LEAD****Guidance:**

Employees who will be exposed to lead shall be provided with the health risks and toxic effects associated with its exposure.

A medical examination and health monitoring shall be arranged for workers prior to performing lead risk work and shall be conducted periodically thereafter. A copy of the health monitoring report shall also be provided to the worker once obtained from the medical practitioner. Health

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monitoring reports shall be kept confidential and maintained for at least thirty years after the record is made. The report and results of a worker shall not be disclosed to another person without the workers written consent.

## Clean up:

Lead dust must be cleaned away promptly. All surfaces in the work area shall be kept free as practicable from accumulations of lead dust to prevent contamination

## Changing facilities:

Eating, smoking, or drinking in a lead process area is prohibited

A lunch room, hygiene, shower and changing facilities shall be provided when exposure to lead is present.

## Risk Assessment:

A Risk Assessment shall be completed prior to commencement of a task to determine the risk of lead exposure to workers. The assessment must include;

- The airborne lead levels
- Tasks & Processes required to be undertaken
- The likely duration and frequency of exposure to lead
- Possible routes of exposure
- Control measures to reduce/eliminate the risk of lead exposure

If it is determined that lead risk work will be conducted on site the regulator must be notified within seven days. The notification must state the kind of lead process being carried out, and a copy of the notice must be kept on site while the work is being carried out.

The notice shall be accessible to the WHS representative and any worker likely to be exposed to lead.

A worker must be immediately removed from carrying out lead risk work if:

- Biological monitoring of the worker shows that the workers blood lead level is above specified levels;  
Upon medical advice to remove a worker from lead risk work  
There is an indication that a risk control measure has failed

## REFERENCES

- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022
- Provision of information on hazardous substances at workplaces - Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
- Code of practice: Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Workplace exposure standards for airborne contaminants (WES list)