

Working with Hazardous Substances / chemicals

Safety@Optus – Hazard Standard



What you need to know

if you import, supply, store or you are the person that uses them, basically If your work involves hazardous chemicals, you have a legal obligation to keep people safe.

Generally, the best way of controlling risks associated with hazardous chemicals or substances is to make sure workers are aware of the risk associated with the chemical / substance and the harm it can cause if not handled or used correctly. This extends to the transport, storage and clean-up after use of the hazardous substance or chemical.

Planning your work

To understand how best to manage the risks associated with chemical substance hazards, it is important to first understand how the chemical or substance can get into your body and the damage the chemical or substance can do. There are 3 main routes of entry into the human body, they are : **inhalation**, breathing it in - **ingestion**, swallowed or injected - and **absorption** through the skin and eyes.

Take into consideration during your risk assessment / management strategy

- The hazardous properties of the chemical or substance - e.g. is it corrosive – flammable or explosive – is it respirable – is it poisonous or dangerous if it gets on your skin or in your eyes or is it a combination of all the above.
- Could there be potential reactions between the chemical and another substance if mixed or if it comes in contact with a specific product or surface.
- Is there an exposure standard for the chemical or substance of concern
- What does the Safety Data sheet say about the transport, handling, storage and first aid treatment of the substance or chemical

Legal Responsibilities

There are several Commonwealth WHS Regulations 2017, regarding hazardous chemicals and substances. The Commonwealth has also developed several Codes in support of the regulations such as Model Code of Practice – Managing risks of hazardous chemicals correctly labelling all hazardous chemicals- storing hazardous chemicals - keeping hazardous chemical register All codes can be found at Safe Work Australia:

Use of this Standard

This Standard “at times” will need to be read and used in parallel with other WHS standards to ensure that all concurrent duty holders are aware of its WHS obligations and all Optus contractor requirements are being met.

The requirements listed in this standard will be used by Optus as part of the contractor audit assurance framework to verify the management of the WHS contractual and legislative obligations

Australian Standards and Industry codes

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to be aware of “where applicable” how it meets relevant Australian codes and standards for working with hazardous chemicals or Substances and any subsequent PPE needed, EG; P1 and P2 mask requirement



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Safety@Optus – Contractor Requirements



Contractor Requirements

1. The Supplier must have a process of risk assessment to identify any type of hazardous substance or chemical and the associated risks.
2. Where it is identified, the Supplier must have a process make all workers on site aware of the chemicals or substances and what the controls that are in place prior to the work commencing.
3. The control measures used to manage the different types of substances or chemicals must be clearly be communicated and consulted to all workers for input, then documented on the site-specific SWMS and the project risk register if applicable to other sites.
4. All PPE (personal protective equipment) that is used as a part of a control measure must meet any required Australians standards if applicable and be fit for purpose.
5. All PPE must only be used for its intended purpose and in accordance with manufacturers recommendations
6. The Supplier is required to ensure that all hazardous chemicals or substances are recorded on their correct registers with SDS (Safety Data Sheets) attached and available upon request.
7. The Supplier is to ensure that all hazardous chemicals and substances are stored, transported, labelled and used in accordance with manufacturers recommendations or relevant codes of practice
8. The Supplier is to ensure that all hazardous chemicals are labelled, clearly marked and visible.
9. The Supplier is to ensure that if a chemical spill / containment kit is required, there is one is available
10. The Supplier is to ensure that First aid kits have suitable content to treat any person on the site if an incident in relation to a hazardous chemical or substance exposure occurs
11. Where applicable, conduct inspections of works to ensure compliance with the control measures that have been put in place to ensure the safe systems of work are effective
12. A Supplier must be able to verify that any emergency plans, entry and exit plans developed are by an appropriately trained certified personal and the site supervision of the tasks are performed by appropriately trained and where applicable "certified or licenced personal "
13. The Supplier is to ensure that any Council or local authority permits that are required are on site and available upon request
14. There is to be accountable personal on site that can demonstrate the risk controls that are in place are fit for purpose, do not exceed any workplace exposure standards and effective in preventing harm