

OCM5

Offshore COSHH essentials



This information will help offshore dutyholders (owners, operators and contractors) to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), as amended, to protect workers' health.

This guidance consolidates good control practice and reinforces existing knowledge with additional information.

It will help you carry out COSHH assessments, review existing assessments, deliver training and in supervising activities involving substances hazardous to health.

It is aimed at staff whose responsibilities include the management of substances hazardous to health on offshore installations (eg occupational health specialists, COSHH assessors, supervisors etc). It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives.

Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow this guidance all the points in this sheet you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.

If you need a service provider (eg consultant), OCM sheets describe what they should deliver.

You may need help from a health and safety expert.

Emergency planning

Control approach 4 Special advice

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice in planning for emergencies and helps identify tasks where an emergency could arise. Emergency planning for confined spaces can be found in OCM1.

Action

- ✓ Identify tasks that might lead to an emergency situation.
- ✓ Involve the offshore medic in emergency planning.

Planning

- ✓ Keep plans as simple as possible and available at any time.
- ✓ Display emergency contact details.
- ✓ Planning for specific emergencies should involve the emergency response teams, offshore medic, first aiders and employees.
- ✓ Consult the emergency response team (ERT) and the medic responsible for primary care.
- ✓ Keep a stock of necessary spillage control kits, neutralising materials, personal decontamination equipment and personal protective equipment.
- ✓ Decide which emergencies you expect your employees to tackle, which ones you'll need help with, and which ones need everyone to get out of the area.
- ✓ Typical emergency situations could include:
 - someone collapsing;
 - failure of an engineering control system;
 - leak from process plant or spillage from container, particularly in a confined space;
 - failure of breathing apparatus; and
 - fire.

Emergency procedures

- ✓ When things go wrong, you need effective arrangements for rapid rescue of those in danger.
- ✓ Identify tasks that might involve an emergency, or could damage services nearby, eg power, chemical-containing or pressurised systems.
- ✓ Identify locations where communication is difficult, eg in calling for help, or it is difficult to evacuate a casualty.
- ✓ Train everyone involved. Hold practices and modify your procedures to improve the performance.

- ✓ Practices should include making the site safe, clearing spills, rescuing casualties etc.
- ✓ Where personal alarms are provided, these must be fully charged and working properly.

First aid

- ✓ Have at least two first aiders per shift to give first aid. Include 'back-to-back' workers.
- ✓ Provide first-aid equipment, and consider special hazards.

Training

- ✓ Train everyone potentially involved in emergencies – not just rescuers and first aiders.
- ✓ Induction must include how to contact the control room to summon emergency response and the location of alarm points.
- ✓ Train everyone to know when and how to act, when to get help, and when to evacuate and raise the alarm.

Cleaning

- ✓ Provide spill clear-up kits and equipment.
- ✓ Appoint someone as responsible for looking after these.
- ✓ Seek expert advice.

Liquid spills

- ✓ The absorbent you need depends on the liquid:
 - The quantity likely to be spilt, eg more or less than 100 litres.
 - The surface – smooth or porous? Or on water?
 - The liquid – thick and viscous or flowing?
 - Solution in water or able to mix with water?
 - Oxidising, corrosive, flammable, toxic or harmful?
- ✓ Use good ventilation for clearing up harmful volatile liquids. An air blower may be required.

Solid spills

- ✓ Use gentle shovelling and vacuuming or wet cleaning to avoid stirring up dust.

Caution: Don't use a brush or compressed air for cleaning.

Decontamination

- ✓ Check safety data sheets for information on neutralising and decontaminating spills and contaminated equipment.
- ✓ Treat and store cleaned up materials as hazardous waste.

Further information

Basic advice on first aid at work
Leaflet INDG347(rev1)

HSE Books 2006 (priced packs of 20) ISBN 978 0 7176 6193 0)

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg347.pdf

You can find the full Offshore COSHH essentials series at www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm

This guidance was developed by representatives from the UK offshore oil and gas industry and trade unions, with HSE.