Chilton Town Council

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (COSHH) POLICY

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
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Introduction

Using chemicals or other hazardous substances, whether they are in solid, liquid or gas form, can put people's health at risk. Significant human and financial costs result from failures to control hazardous substances adequately. Such failures may also result in action by enforcing authorities, in the form of prosecutions, or of mandatory orders governing work practices or equipment.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations (COSHH) 002 describe a management approach to dealing with hazardous substances and make employers responsible for properly assessing the use of chemicals and substances and protecting all persons who may come into contact with them.

The Town Council shall use this document to guide the identification, control and reduction of risks associated with chemicals and other hazardous substances.

Management of Substances Hazardous to Health

Stage 1	Assess the risks
Stage 2	Decide what precautions are needed
Stage 3	Prevent or adequately control exposure
Stage 4	Ensure that control measures are used and maintained
Stage 5	Monitor the exposure
Stage 6	Carry out appropriate health surveillance
Stage 7	Prepare plans and procedures to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies
Stage 8	Ensure employees are properly informed, trained and supervised.
Stage 9	Monitor
Stage 10	Audit
Stage 11	Review

Stage 1 – assessment of risks

Chilton Town Council shall:

- Identify all chemicals and substances used;
- Identify all work processes which generate hazardous substances (eg dust, smoke, etc);
- Carry out risk assessments;
- Record the findings of these assessment when they are found to be significant.

Assessments will include all substances that may be carcinogens, mutagens or asthmagens.

In conducting the risk assessments, information will be obtained from suppliers.

Assessors will be trained and competent to carry out the risk assessment. Where competence is not available in-house, external specialists will be consulted.

Assessments will be reviewed when:

- There is a reason to suspect the assessment is no longer valid;
- There has been a significant change in the work;
- The results of any monitoring employees exposures shows it to be necessary
- The date of the next planned review is reached.

Stage 2 - precautions

Where significant risks are identified, Chilton Town Council shall decide what precautions are required to remove the risk or reduce it to an acceptable level.

Stage 3 – prevention and control

Chilton Town Council shall prevent exposure to substances hazardous to health if it is reasonably practicable to do so by:

- Changing the process or activity so that the hazardous substance is not needed or generates;
- Replacing it with a safer alternative;
- Using a safer form, eg granules instead of powder.

Where prevention is not reasonably practicable, exposure shall be controlled by:

- Using appropriate work processes;
- Control of exposure at source; or
- Providing personal protective equipment, as a last resort.

Stage 4 – use and maintenance of control measures

Chilton Town Council shall maintain any control measures to ensure that they operate properly and are used. Regular checks will be made to ensure their efficiency and effectiveness.

Stage 5 – monitor the exposure

Chilton Town Council shall, when required by the risk assessment, undertake air monitoring to measure the concentrations of hazardous substances or install automatic alarms to warn or dangerous concentration levels. Records of all monitoring will be kept. If personal monitoring is undertaken, employees will have access to their own records.

Stage 6 – health surveillance

Chilton Town Council shall carry out health surveillance where the risk assessment requires it. Health records will be kept for 40 years.

Stage 7 – accidents, incidents and emergencies

Chilton Town Council shall prepare plans and procedures where the risk assessment identifies the potential for risks relating to the use of hazardous substances that are outside the normal day-to-day activities, eg ammonia.

Where appropriate, the emergency services will be consulted and employees will practice drills at regular intervals.

Stage 8 – training and information

Training in the findings from the assessment and the workplace precautions is essential. Chilton Town Council shall provide employees with suitable and sufficient information, including:

- The names of substances they work with
- The main findings of any risk assessment
- The precautions they should take
- How to properly fit and use personal protective equipment
- The results of any monitoring
- Emergency procedures to be followed.

Stage 9 - monitoring

Chilton Town Council shall monitor the performance of employees who are involved in the implementation of this policy.

Stage 10 - audit

Chilton Town Council shall audit to ensure that processes and documents relating to this policy are properly implemented.

Stage 11 - review

Chilton Town Council should review this policy as required by the outcome of monitoring, audit and/or changes in legislation or guidance.

MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers will ensure that COSHH risk assessments are undertaken in their areas of responsibility and that the findings are recorded.

They will ensure that employees are consulted and involved in the assessment process and that they receive adequate training and information prior to the assessment that ensures they are able to participate fully.

Following the assessment, managers will ensure that adequate resources are provided to enable workplace precautions to be implemented and that risk control systems are maintained. In particular, training and supervision is an important part of this responsibility.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are required to report to their line manager:

- Any defects or shortfalls found in workplace precautions, equipment, or systems of work;
- Symptoms, pain or discomfort that may arise from their work and in particular from the use of chemicals or other hazardous substances.

All employees must:

- Use the workplace precautions and systems of work in accordance with the training and instruction provided.