



Guidance note

In August this year the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** started implementing new and revised **Workplace Exposure Limits (WEL's)**.

This is to help protect workers from the **ill-health** effects of exposure to **hazardous substances** in the workplace.

This includes, new entries for fourteen substances, reductions in **WEL's** for eleven substances and new skin (SK) annotations for four substances.

Important changes to Workplace Exposure Limits.

According to the HSE, **13,000 deaths** each year are estimated to be linked to past **exposures at work** primarily to **chemicals** or dust in the **UK**.

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Why is this important?

Workplaces will need to ready themselves and review control measures to ensure exposure limits are met.

All hazardous substances should be assessed to prevent or reduce harm or ill health to the people that work with or around them.

What is our advice?

Controls that you may have had in place may now be inadequate and require improving.

Substances you use that were not before listed in EH40 may now have WEL's and this needs to be considered.

As part of your continuing programme of control, you should review what hazardous substances your employees could be exposed to and assess the risk. You must ensure suitable and effective controls are in place where required.

How can we help?

Exposure to hazardous substances must be controlled below the relevant WEL's. Importantly if the substance is known to cause cancer, genetic defects, allergy or asthma symptoms, or allergic skin reaction exposure, the level must be reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.

Our team of experts can:

- Prepare COSHH risk assessments.
- Measure personal exposure to dusts, chemicals and biological agents.
- Evaluate and assess the effectiveness of controls such as; ventilation testing, including Local Exhaust Ventilation and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) face fit testing.

Consult and advise on risk management including appropriate compliance with:

- REACH and Chemical Exposure guidelines.
- Toxicology.
- Exposure Limits.