

BRIEFING 08

Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

Many site materials — dusts, cements, solvents, resins, fuels and adhesives — can harm your health. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) require us to control exposure.

Key hazards

- Silica dust from cutting concrete, blocks, stone and screed — can cause lung disease.
- Wood dust, cement and plaster — skin and respiratory irritation, dermatitis.
- Solvents, isocyanates and adhesives — fumes that harm lungs and skin.

Controls

- Read the COSHH assessment and safety data sheet for any product before use.
- Use water suppression or on-tool extraction (LEV) when cutting — never dry-cut.
- Wear the RPE and gloves specified; RPE must be face-fit tested.
- Ensure good ventilation; keep containers closed and labelled.
- Wash hands before eating, drinking or smoking.

Your responsibilities

Only use substances covered by an approved COSHH assessment. Store and dispose of chemicals correctly, and report spills immediately.

STOP & ASK Never dry-cut materials that produce silica dust — use water suppression or extraction, and the correct RPE.