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## Epoxide Resins (COSHH Regulation apply) Safe Working Practices

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NOTE: The employer is required to assess the risks to health, introduce a system of control, monitor results, retain records and review procedures from time to time (see COSHH).

### 1. GENERAL

- 1.1 No smoking.
- 1.2 No storage or use of other flammable items.
- 1.3 No naked lights or fires etc.
- 1.4 Extractors must be used at all times.
- 1.5 All materials must be stored in correctly labelled containers and locked away when not in use.

### 2. CLOTHING

- 2.1 Safety goggles must be worn when mixing and using resins.
- 2.2 Overalls must be regularly changed and laundered.
- 2.3 Gloves must be worn when handling uncured resins and fibre matting.
- 2.4 A mask must be worn during sanding operations.

### 3. PERSONAL

- 3.1 Do not eat or drink in the working area.
- 3.2 Use barrier cream at all times.
- 3.3 Use a resin removing cream and wash thoroughly before smoking, eating and all toilet purposes.

### 4. FIBREGLASS RESINS

#### **Safe Handling Guide**

The hazards which can occur by mishandling can be classified as follows:-

- Irritation due to contamination of the skin and eyes.
- Danger or irritation due to inhalation of vapours given off during handling and cure.
- Toxic effects resulting from oral ingestion or skin absorption.
- Fire risk from improper storage or use of materials containing flammable solvents.

Problems can be avoided by making sure the following simple rules are followed:-

- Maintain strict personal cleanliness at all times.
- Prevent skin contact.
- Wear clean protective clothing and launder it regularly.
- Protect eyes from possible splashes.
- Examine the product data sheet and the container label carefully for any special instructions.
- Do not inhale vapours, and only handle materials in well-ventilated areas.

- Do not put contaminated articles in pockets.
- Use a resin removing cream and wash thoroughly with soap and water before smoking, eating and all toilet purposes.

## PROTECTION OF SKIN

Before handling epoxy compositions the hands and forearms and other exposed areas should always be protected by the use of a suitable barrier cream, and in addition rubber or plastic gloves (preferably with washable cotton liners) should be worn. If accidental skin contamination does occur, then the bulk of the material should be removed with a paper towel.

The remaining traces should be removed with a specialist resin-removing cream, followed by thorough scrubbing with soap and water.

## GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

The skin must not be washed in strong solvents (acetone, xylene, etc.) or in any petroleum spirits such as gas oil. Strong solvents cannot only cause irritation themselves, but will also remove the natural protective oils from the skin. They can also dissolve harmful materials and soak them further into the skin - quite the reverse of the desired effect. The use of a properly designed cleansing cream obviates these dangers.

Certain individuals have a much greater susceptibility than the average to skin irritation by chemicals. While many people may experience no discomfort in working closely with a particular substance, some individuals may be badly affected by extremely small concentrations. Persons with a known record of skin sensitivity should not be employed on work involving epoxy resin systems. Any user showing signs of sensitisation should be removed from this type of work and medical attention sought.

## EPOXY

### **Protection of the Eyes**

It is most important to protect the eyes during the mixing and application of epoxy resin compositions. Splashing can occur during mixing and goggles or a face visor should be worn. If eyes do become contaminated they should be washed immediately with copious amounts of clean water for at least 10 minutes, and medical attention sought without delay.

### **Oral Ingestion**

Oral ingestion should never occur with proper handling of epoxy compositions. The risk can be minimised by prohibiting smoking and consumption of food in the working area and by instructing personnel to wash their hands thoroughly, using a cleansing cream and then soap and water, before smoking, eating and drinking.

### **Flammable Solvents**

If an epoxy composition (or an associated liquid material used for equipment cleaning) contains volatile solvents which are flammable or highly flammable they must never be mixed or used in enclosed or poorly ventilated areas, and all usual prohibitions on smoking, naked flames and ignition of vapour by sparks must be rigorously enforced.

### **Disposal of Containers**

Do not leave any empty containers on site, where any residue could be a hazard to children or animals. Replace lids, and remove all containers to the central disposal point.