Chemical Safety

Whatever the size of your business you will use some chemicals. Some chemicals and substances are harmful, and can cause injury or ill health. You must assess the risk of these materials and provide protection for staff and members of the public.

Safety point	Why?	How do you do this?
You must prevent or properly control exposure to chemicals or hazardous substances.	Using chemicals or other hazardous substances at work can put people's health at risk, so the law requires employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to prevent ill-health.	By assessing the risk to staff and implementing any necessary control measures e.g. PPE, training. Do staff use chemicals or hazardous substances? Yes ☐ No ☐

We use the following chemicals or hazardous substances

Examples	We have	We use it for
Substances used directly in work activities (e.g. glues, paints, cleaning agents); Substances generated during work activities (e.g. fumes from soldering and welding); Naturally occurring substances (e.g. grain dust); Biological agents such as bacteria and other micro-organisms.		
Identify the chemical or hazardous substance.	To determine the potential effects on health.	You must get hold of, and read, the Safety Data Sheets for the chemical from your supplier. This will tell you what the hazards are, how it should be handled, stored and disposed of and what should be done in the case of an accident. For some chemicals the safety information is contained on the product label e.g. bleach.

Safety point	Why?	How do you do this?
Chemicals or hazardous substances should be used and handled in a safe manner.	Incorrect use of hazardous products could result in exposure through inhalation, direct contact with the skin, splashing them into the eyes or ingestion.	Follow the manufacturer's guidance in the safety data sheets. This may include using personal protective equipment which must be suitable for the product. Record this on your Chemical Safety check sheet at the end of this section.
Have you got the right protective equipment?	Protective equipment prevents or reduces contact with the hazardous product.	Do you check the manufacturer's instructions and provide the protective equipment they specify? Yes ☐ No ☐ Do you train staff to use the protective equipment properly? Yes ☐ No ☐ Do you check it is being properly used? Yes ☐ No ☐
Are chemicals and hazardous substances stored safely?	Some chemicals and substances should be stored in specific ways, as instructed by the manufacturer or supplier as they may pose a fire risk. Restricting access to hazardous substances can prevent unauthorized use and exposure.	Where are the chemicals stored? Do your chemicals require any specific storage requirements e.g. ventilation, segregation of chemicals. Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes what are they? How do you prevent unauthorized access? Who is responsible for ensuring carrying out the above?

Safety point	Why?	How do you do this?
Staff must be properly trained in the correct use of chemicals and hazardous substances.	Some hazardous products have risks which are not obvious to people using them. Refresher training will reduce the chances of bad habits developing in the workforce.	Do you train staff on hazardous products you use? Yes ☐ No ☐ Do you provide refresher training? Yes ☐ No ☐ If so how often? [ ] Who responsible for carrying out the training? [ ] Record staff training on the staff training record sheets

Chemical Safety Checks

Chemical or hazardous substance	Who uses it?	Control measures and protective equipment	Staff trained to use hazardous product