COSHH Toolbox Talk

Key points, do's and don'ts, and questions with answers. The attendance sign-off sheet is on the last page.

Asked to show your toolbox talk records? The Site Book keeps each talk and its signatures with the job, on Pro: **thesitebook.co.uk/features/toolbox-talks**

Key points to cover

- COSHH requires employers to assess, control, and monitor exposure to hazardous substances
- Always read the safety data sheet (SDS) before using any chemical product
- Common construction hazards: cement (dermatitis, burns), solvents, resins, wood dust, welding fumes, diesel exhaust fumes
- Use the hierarchy of controls: substitute with a less hazardous product, then engineer out the exposure, then use PPE as a last resort
- Health surveillance may be required for workers regularly exposed to certain substances
- COSHH assessments must be reviewed regularly and whenever the task or product changes

Do's and don'ts

Do

- Check the safety data sheet for every product you use
- Use on-tool dust extraction where provided
- Wash hands thoroughly after handling chemicals — especially cement
- Store chemicals in their original labelled containers
- Attend health surveillance appointments if required

Don't

- Never mix chemical products unless the SDS says it is safe
- Never decant chemicals into unmarked containers
- Never dry sweep dust — use a vacuum with an H-class filter or damp down
- Never ignore skin irritation or breathing problems — report them immediately
- Never use compressed air to clean off dust from clothing or surfaces

Questions to check understanding

Ask each question and let the crew answer before you read out the answer.

Q1. What does COSHH stand for?

Answer: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. The COSHH Regulations 2002 require employers to assess and control exposure to hazardous substances at work.

Q2. Where can you find information about the hazards of a chemical product?

Answer: The safety data sheet (SDS) provided by the manufacturer. It lists the hazards, safe handling precautions, first-aid measures, PPE requirements, and storage and disposal instructions.

Q3. What is the correct way to control dust on site?

Answer: Use on-tool extraction or local exhaust ventilation (LEV) to capture dust at source. If sweeping is needed, damp down first or use an H-class vacuum. Never dry sweep or use compressed air.

Q4. Why is wet cement dangerous to skin?

Answer: Wet cement is strongly alkaline (high pH) and can cause serious chemical burns and dermatitis. It can penetrate clothing and footwear. Always wear gloves and wash off any contact immediately.

Attendance sign-off sheet: COSHH Toolbox Talk

Everyone who attended prints their name and signs to confirm they received this talk.

Date _____ **Time** _____

Site or location _____ **Presented by** _____

No.	Name (print)	Company	Signature
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This is general guidance for UK construction sites. Check it against your own risk assessment, method statement and the site before you deliver it. Toolbox talk from The Site Book, reviewed 26 October 2026. Read it online at thesitebook.co.uk/toolbox-talks/coshh.