

Kington Foodbank Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Guidance

Introduction

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health is a UK regulation designed to protect people from health risks associated with hazardous substances. The most common form of hazardous substances encountered in the domestic setting are cleaning products.

Churches Together in Kington do not promote the use of cleaning products which are harmful to persons or the planet. However, it is possible that volunteers may come into contact with some cleaning products which present a potential hazard at hired venues. This document gives guidance on recognition of COSHH and how to proceed.

Incorrect use of hazardous products can cause;

- Skin irritation or chemical burns
- Eye damage
- Breathing problems
- Long-term health conditions

COSHH Symbols

All products that present a potential health hazard will be labelled with a COSHH symbol. It is important that volunteers can recognise these and understand what they mean. The common symbols and their definitions are given below.

Flammable

This symbol means the product can catch fire easily. Keep it away from heat, sparks and open flames.



Corrosive

Corrosive products can burn the skin and damage the eyes. Avoid direct contact and use protective gloves when needed



Toxic

This symbol shows that the product can be dangerous if inhaled, swallowed or absorbed through the skin. Always follow the instructions carefully.



Gas Under Pressure

This symbol is used on aerosols and pressurised containers. Do not puncture or expose them to high heat.



Environmental Hazard

Products with this symbol can be harmful to the environment, especially aquatic life. Dispose of them responsibly.



Harmful / Irritant

Products with this symbol may cause skin or eye irritation, or discomfort if inhaled. Avoid prolonged contact and use with care.



Serious Health Hazard

This symbol warns of long-term health risks, such as breathing problems or organ damage. Use these products carefully and follow safety guidance.



Oxidising

Oxidising products can make fires burn more strongly. Do not mix them with other cleaning chemicals.



Rules for Safe Working

- Always read the label before use. Identify any hazard symbols. If in doubt, refer to the material safety data sheet which can be found on the manufacturer's website.
- Always follow the manufacturers instructions. Use at the correct dilution- never guess.
- Always spray the chemical away from yourself towards the surface to be cleaned and never towards anyone else.
- Always wear gloves and keep skin covered.
- Never ingest the chemical and use in well-ventilated areas.
- Always replace the lid/ closure and store in designated area.
- Never eat, drink or smoke whilst using chemicals
- Never use a substance which is in an unlabelled container

First Aid

- Eyes- rinse immediately with clean cold water or eye wash, holding the eyelids open. Seek medical advice if the product displays a caustic, corrosive or irritant symbol.
- Inhalation- remove from immediate environment to open air if possible and seek medical advice.
- Skin- rinse thoroughly with clean cold water. Seek medical advice if corrosive, caustic or irritant.
- Ingestion- remove product from mouth, do not induce vomiting. Drink plenty of water or milk and seek medical advice.