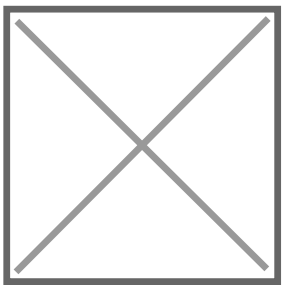

DERMAL EXPOSURE MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT (DEMA)

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU.....

.....that the way you manage workplace skin exposure is actually up to date and correct? It is our experience that far too many believe that they have it right, whereas in reality their workforce is at significant risk of damage to health. This is one aspect of health and safety where there are many myths and misconceptions which, whilst appearing plausible, do not reflect reality.

For example:

If your skin exposure risk assessment is based on the safety data sheet, then there is a very real possibility that it is wrong!

If you believe that as airborne exposure to a sensitiser is below the WEL then your workforce is safe - you may be wrong!

If you use pre-work/barrier creams to protect your workforce, then you are almost certainly putting their health at risk.

If you are using category I gloves for a category III application, then your workforce's health could be at risk.

If you believe that all natural rubber gloves cause latex allergy, then you are not in possession of the real evidence.

We could list many more. The simple fact is that the way the skin interacts with the working environment is much more complex than many realise. What appears 'logical' may be the wrong approach. Even some of the 'official' guidance on risk assessment and risk management is not correct.

With over 50 years of specialisation in this aspect of health and safety we have a unique level of knowledge and expertise to ensure that the way you manage skin exposure complies with both the regulations and the scientific knowledge that we now have about skin and the environment.

FOR PEACE OF MIND.....

.....why not let us review your skin exposure management systems to establish:

Where these match modern knowledge and standards

Where there are situations that are not adequately managed and what needs to be done to bring these up to modern standards of best practice

Our Dermal Exposure Management Assessment is your opportunity to ensure that how you manage skin exposure meets modern knowledge and best practice and helps to minimise any possibility of damage to health due to workplace skin exposure.

One of our partners will spend up to one day in your workplace studying what systems you have in place and how effectively they manage exposure of the skin to workplace hazards, especially chemicals. They will then carry out any necessary research and provide a report detailing their findings, showing where your systems are adequate and where action is required. The report will contain recommendations for any action required.

AIM

The aim is firstly to establish whether the practices and procedures that the client has in place to manage skin exposure are sufficient to meet best practice in ensuring that skin exposure in the workplace is managed to minimise any risk of damage to health arising due to such exposure. In addition the information gained from the assessment should enable EnviroDerm Services to identify where changes are necessary for the client to meet best practice in occupational skin management.

PROCEDURE

In a large organisation it would be unrealistic to study every particular task within the workplace in sufficient depth, nor is this necessary to meet the aim of the assessment. What we need to establish is:

Is there a clear process for assessing risks where skin exposure within the workplace does, or might, occur?

Is the risk assessment based on adequate data on chemical hazards. (Note that the safety data sheet is not usually adequate for this.)

How effective is the process and does it recognise the complexity of the interaction between the skin and the working environment?

Are procedures in place to ensure that any exposures are adequately managed? Do these comply with the hierarchy of control measures required by the regulations? How effective are such risk management measures? In this context, where gloves are used as protection against hazards to the skin, special attention will be paid to the procedures by which gloves are selected and used.

Is there an adequate programme of skin awareness training at all levels within the organisation?

Does the nature of the operation warrant a skin health surveillance system? Is there one in place and does this match the real needs of the organisation?

Have there been cases of occupational skin disease? How well have these been investigated and managed?

ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE:

An introduction by the client into the nature of the operation, the chemicals used, the general approach to health and safety, and in particular to the control of chemicals

Discussion about the current systems in place for skin management

A survey of the actual workplace to identify potential areas of concern and to establish how well these are managed

Discussion on the way in which risk assessment for skin exposure is carried out, in particular the identification of chemical hazards arising out of the work done and how these are assessed

A review of the procedures for selection and use of personal protective equipment for skin protection

A review of personal hygiene (skin care) products and facilities

Investigation into any history of skin problems, how these were investigated and managed

It may be necessary to take away or arrange for certain information to be sent, in particular safety data sheets for specific products of concern following the site survey.

REPORT

The EnviroDerm Services partner involved will review their findings, conduct any necessary desk research into chemical hazards, etc. A report will be prepared covering:

A summary of the general findings

Review of any shortcomings with appropriate explanation and recommendations for action.

A detailed assessment of specific areas of concern, with appropriate detailed recommendations

In addition various items of background information, e.g. Technical Bulletins on specific skin management topics, will be included with the report where necessary.

If required the EnviroDerm Services partner will be available for on-line or telephone discussion of the report, or can be available for a further site visit (at an additional charge) if required.

Get In Touch