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CONTACT US TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES FOR YOUR BUSINESS:

- EHS Risk Assessments
- Occupational Hygiene Surveys
- Ergonomics Surveys
- EHS Management System Development and Implementation
- Environmental Monitoring
- Identification of EHS Legal Requirements and Compliance Audits
- Construction EHS Services
- Construction H&S Files
- Internal Auditor Training
- General EHS Training



Department of Employment and Labour Approved Inspection Authority (OH0049-CI-09)



OH0049



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PFAS (FOREVER CHEMICALS)

Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances

Used in a wide range of consumer goods such as drinking water, food packaging, non-stick cooking utensils / cookware, the beds we sleep in, stain resistant fabric, fire fighting foam and even within our own bodies, PFAS, also known as "forever chemicals" are man-made, long-lasting and potentially harmful substances that permeate almost every environment on the planet.

They are called "forever chemicals" because they do not break down in the environment and remain in soil, water and air for many years. Even at low levels, due to their ability to accumulate within living organisms, these chemicals can gradually build up over time to a point where they become harmful. Local waters contaminated by PFAS, are impacting fish - which in turn, has an impact on public health.



Research

A recent study, conducted by researchers at the University of Milan and published in the journal Environmental Science and Technology has revealed that PFAS are linked to numerous health problems such as:

- cancer
- reproductive problems
- developmental problems
- immune system dysfunction

The study's findings also highlight the need for a global approach to regulating PFAS, as the chemicals can travel long distances through air and water. Many countries continue to produce and use PFAS, which leads to contamination in other parts of the world.

Actions you can take to reduce the amount of PFAS in your home and community:

- Avoid products marketed as stain / water resistant.
- Avoid nonstick cookware, even if it says PFOA free, because it can still contain other PFAS that can cause harmful fumes when heated to high temperatures.
- Take your own containers for food takeout orders.
- Use glass containers when storing left-overs.
- Vacuum and dust your home frequently to prevent PFAS from gathering in dust and soft materials such as carpeting.
- Purchase PFAS-free products.



COLD STRESS
should ideally be conducted in winter months

To ensure a safe, healthy and productive workplace, maintenance of thermal comfort is critical. The thermal requirements of the Environmental Regulations for Workplaces, OHS Act (85 of 1993) make provision for cold stress:

- * Where the dry bulb temperature taken over a four-hour period falls below 6°C indoors, or below 6°C at any time outdoors, reasonable steps must be taken to protect employees against the cold.
- * Employees working in refrigerated environments must be provided with thermal protective clothing and medical surveillance, and the time spent in the refrigerated environment may not exceed the periods prescribed by the regulations.

CONTACT SAFETECH FOR A QUOTE TODAY

R2950
PER PERSON
EXCL VAT



ONLINE COURSE

**ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018
INTERNAL AUDITORS**

A 3-day internal Auditor Training Course will be presented to develop the necessary skills to successfully audit an ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 Management System.

- Assess and report on conformance to the standards
- Complete and audit report

Presented by **Dr Brett Williams**

Brett has 35 years of experience in HSE Management and is a member of two SABS Technical Committees which develop HSE Management Systems.

21st - 23rd June 2023
09:00 - 15:00 each day

REGISTER NOW

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VIBRATION

and the effect on employee health

The human body is made up of major interconnecting systems. Repeated exposure to high levels of vibration can cause localised disruption in one or more of these systems, namely:

- vascular system (distributes oxygen and nutrients to tissues throughout the body)
- nervous system (provides sensory input to our brain; as well as muscle control to everything from our heart to our fingertips and toes)
- musculoskeletal system

There is also evidence that workers who are exposed to vibration and noise at the same time are more likely to suffer hearing loss than workers exposed to the same level of noise alone. Exposure to both vibration and noise can also increase the risk of musculoskeletal problems.

1 TWO GENERAL TYPES OF VIBRATION 2

HAV = Hand Arm Vibration
Caused by the use of vibrating hand-held tools.

Symptoms:

- Nerves (tingling, numbness)
- Blood vessels (white finger, pain)
- Carpal tunnel (pain, tingling, numbness)

These symptoms may become more severe and frequent with continued exposure to vibration, especially in cold weather. This can eventually lead to permanent disability and even amputation.

WBV = Whole Body Vibration
Caused by sitting, standing or lying on a vibrating surface.

Symptoms:

- headaches
- motion sickness
- chronic back pain
- stomach problems
- sleep and visual disturbances

Employees that operate construction plant, agricultural machines and quarry vehicles are especially at risk.

HOW EXPOSURE AFFECTS PEOPLE

Severity of health effects vary from person to person, but are influenced by:

- **threshold value** = maximum intensity of vibration exposure (of healthy worker, every workday, for the duration of their fulltime employment) that does not result in adverse health effects.
- **dose-response relationship** = how severity of ill health effect is related to exposure.
- **latent period** = time from first exposure to appearance of symptoms.

Workers are less likely to develop vibration-related injuries or disease if their exposure to vibration is maintained at sufficiently low levels.

Identifying signs and symptoms at an early stage is important and employees need to report these to their employer.

A VIBRATION SURVEY WILL:

- identify potential sources and who is likely to be affected;
- contain reasonable estimates of employee exposure;
- identify whether vibration control measures are required and make recommendations;
- identify any employees who need to be provided with health surveillance and whether any are at particular risk.



EMERGENCY

While it seems common sense to not block emergency exits, it happens more often than you might think... even if the space is being used temporarily.



Keep workers alert to best practices and protocol through signs, labels and floor markings:

- Create boundary lines near exits to remind workers that items do not belong past that point;
- Use signage to mark alarms, doors and important information;
- Use labels to identify the contents of containers and other items.

EXIT →

Reinforce safe work policies thorough communication, training and continuous improvement.

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