

Handling Solvent-Soaked Rags Risk Assessment

Business Name:		ABN:	
Business Address:			
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:	

THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU ON THIS PROJECT

Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	

RISK MATRIX									
LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION	HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS	
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE			Elimination Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	Substitution Replace the hazard.	
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Review before work starts.	Isolation Isolate People from the hazard	
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.	Engineering Isolate the hazard	
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	Administrative Change	
								PPE	
Risk Rating & Required Action:								Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:	
4A		Stop work. The risk is intolerable. Eliminate the hazard or redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or higher-level authorisation is required.						Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid:	
3H		Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.						1. Eliminate	
2M		Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.						2. Substitute	
1L		Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.						3. Isolate	
								4. Engineering	
								5. Administrative	
								6. PPE	
Consequence Scale:								Always document why a lower-order control is accepted if elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable.	
Consequence	People (injury/illness)		Project / Assets		Compliance / Reputation				
Catastrophic	Fatality or permanent total disability		project shutdown		Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution				
Major	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)		critical delay		Improvement notice; major media coverage				
Moderate	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day		moderate delay		Minor breach; adverse client comment				
Minor	First-aid only, no lost time		negligible delay		Isolated non-conformance				
Insignificant	No injury		no schedule impact		Deviation caught and corrected on site				
								<i>aligned with Safe Work Australia's Managing the risk of fatigue at work (2023) and ISO 45001:2018 clauses 6–8.</i>	

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
1. Preparation	Inhalation of fumes, Skin contact with solvents	3H	<p>Ensure proper ventilation in the area before starting work.</p> <p>Wear approved respirators to avoid inhaling fumes.</p> <p>Use chemical-resistant gloves to prevent skin contact.</p> <p>Inspect all personal protective equipment (PPE) prior to use.</p> <p>Set up emergency wash stations in close proximity.</p> <p>Review Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for the solvent being used.</p> <p>Limit access to the work area to authorised personnel only.</p> <p>Conduct a risk assessment briefing before commencing work.</p> <p>Have fire extinguishers ready in case of any flammable incidents.</p> <p>Ensure all workers are trained on the use of solvents safely.</p>	2M
2. Gathering Materials	Spillage of solvents, Improper PPE	2H	<p>Use proper containers for solvent transport.</p> <p>Check labels to ensure correct product is used.</p> <p>Prepare PPE as listed in the SDS.</p> <p>Double-check that all PPE fits correctly and is free of damage.</p> <p>Train all employees on the necessity of wearing PPE.</p> <p>Have spill kits readily available in case of accidental spillage.</p> <p>Regularly inspect storage areas for potential hazards.</p> <p>Provide supervision to ensure compliance with safety regulations.</p> <p>Ensure all storage areas are labelled appropriately.</p> <p>Keep materials off the floor to avoid tripping hazards.</p>	1L
3. Soaking Rags	Overexposure to solvents, Fire risk due to flammable vapours	4A	<p>Only perform the task in a well-ventilated area.</p> <p>Use minimal quantities of solvent necessary for the task.</p> <p>Supervise the soaking process to maintain safety compliance.</p> <p>Employ flammable safety cabinets to store excess solvents.</p> <p>Ensure all rags are fully submerged to avoid vapour buildup.</p> <p>Keep an inventory list of solvent quantities used.</p> <p>Have a fire extinguishing protocol in place at all times.</p> <p>Use non-sparking tools around solvents.</p>	2M

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			Regular infrared checks to avoid overheating. Store soaked rags in a sealed, non-combustible container.	
4. Transporting Soaked Rags	Spillage during transport, Inadequate containment measures	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
5. Storage of Soaked Rags	Spontaneous combustion, Exposure to toxic vapours	4A	[REDACTED]	2M
6. Cleaning Work Area	Residual solvent inhalation, Skin contact with residue	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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7. Disposal of Solvent Waste	Environmental contamination, Incorrect disposal	4A		2M
8. Equipment Maintenance	Malfunctioning equipment, electrical hazards	3H		1L
9. Incident Reporting	Underreporting incidents, Delayed response	2M		1L

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10. Continuous Training	Lack of updated knowledge, Non-compliance with safety procedures	2M		1L
11. Ventilation Management	Concentration of harmful fumes, Ineffective exhaust systems	4A		2M
12. Fire Safety Management	Fire outbreak due to flammable solvents, Spread of fire from one area to another	4A		1L

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13. Chemical Hazard Communication	Misidentification of chemicals, Inadequate information dissemination	3H		1L
14. Emergency Response Planning	Inadequate emergency response or communication during emergencies	4A		2M
15. Supervision and Monitoring	Non-compliance with procedures, Overlooking potential hazards due to routine	3H		1L

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SAMPLE

EMERGENCY RESPONSE – CALL 000 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ensure to have an Emergency Management Plan in place as well as adequate numbers of trained first aid staff with easy access to fully stocked first aid kits, rescue equipment, material safety data sheets, adequate access to emergency communication equipment and fire-fighting equipment suitable for all classes of fire and ignition sources.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE. DELETE THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES IF ANY STATE THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE

Queensland & Australian Capital Territory

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

Legislation QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws>

Codes of Practice QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Legislation ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>

Codes of Practice ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Victoria

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017

Legislation VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations>

Codes of Practice VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice>

New South Wales

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2017

Legislation NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation>

Codes of Practice NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-codes-of-practice>

Western Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022

Legislation Western Australia: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/legislation>

Codes of Practice WA: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/codes-practice>

Northern Territory

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulation 2011

Legislation NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws>

Codes of Practice NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Safe Work Australia Links

Law and Regulation (All States): <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation>

Model Codes of Practice: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice>

Model Codes of Practice

- Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work
- Confined spaces
- Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Welding processes
- First aid in the workplace
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces
- Hazardous manual tasks
- Managing the risk of falls in housing construction
- Managing electrical risks in the workplace
- Demolition work
- Excavation work
- Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Managing the work environment and facilities
- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace
- Construction work

South Australia

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)

Legislation for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/resources/legislation>

Codes of Practice for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/codes-of-practice#COPs>

Tasmania

Work Health and Safety Act 2012

Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2012

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012

Work Health and Safety (Transitional) Regulations 2012

Legislation for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>

Codes of Practice for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Details of permits, licenses or access required by regulatory bodies (add or delete as required):

- Permits from local council
- Authorisation to commence work
- Any required documents.