

SAFE WORK PRACTICES CLEANING SOLVENTS & FLAMMABLES

**This information does not take precedence over OH&S. All employees should be familiar with the Saskatchewan Employment Act and the OH&S Regulations.*

GENERAL: Cleaning solvents are used in day-to-day work to clean tools and equipment. Special care must be taken to protect the worker from hazards which may be created from the use of these liquids. Wherever possible, solvents should be nonflammable and non toxic.

The foreman must be aware of all solvents/flammables that are used on the job, and be sure that all workers who use these materials have been instructed in their proper use and any hazard they pose.

The following instructions or rules apply when solvents/flammables are used:

1. Use nonflammable solvents for general cleaning.
2. When flammable liquids are used, make sure that no hot work is permitted in the area.
3. Store flammables and solvents in special storage areas. Certain products must be protected from freezing – check labels before storing. Check toxic hazards of all solvents before use. (MSDS)
4. Provide adequate ventilation where all solvents and flammables are being used.
5. Use goggles or face shields to protect the face and eyes from splashes or sprays.
6. Use rubber gloves to protect hands.
7. Wear protective clothing to prevent contamination of the worker's clothes.
8. When breathing hazards exist, use the appropriate respiratory protection.
9. Never leave solvents in open tubs or vats – return them to storage drums or tanks.
10. Ensure that proper containers are used for transportation, storage and field use of solvents/flammables. If containers are leaking or damaged, or if labels are missing or difficult to read, inform you supervisor.
11. Ensure MSDS sheets are available and supplier, workplace or shift labels are visible.
12. Where solvents are controlled products, ensure all employees using or in the vicinity of use or storage are trained and certified in the Workplace Hazardous materials Information System. Ensure all WHMIS requirements are met.