

	<b>WORKING WITH CEMENT</b>	Date:
	<b>TOOLBOX / TAILGATE TALK</b>	Presenter:

## WORKING WITH CEMENT

### Health Effects

Cement can cause ill-health mainly by:-

**Skin contact:** contact with wet cement can cause both burns and dermatitis:

- **Cement burns:** if freshly mixed concrete or mortar gets trapped against the skin, e.g. by falling inside your boots or gloves, very serious skin burns or ulcers can result which can take several months to heal and may need skin grafting;
- **Dermatitis:** skin affected with dermatitis feels itchy and sore and looks red, scaly and cracked. Two sorts of dermatitis can occur:

#### **Irritant dermatitis**

- results from direct damage to the skin caused by the combination of wetness, chemical corrosiveness and abrasiveness of cement in concrete and mortar;

#### **Allergic dermatitis**

- Results when you become sensitised to chromium salts present in the raw materials used to make cement. Sensitisation to additives such as pigments, epoxy resins and hardeners can also occur.

**Eye contact:** contact with cement powder or wet cement can cause irritation and inflammation.

**Inhalation of dust:** high levels of dust can be produced when cement is handled, for example when emptying bags of cement or during their disposal. In the short term, exposure to high levels of cement dust irritates the nose and throat and causes difficulty with breathing. There is uncertainty about the long term effects of breathing in cement dust; chronic chest trouble is possible.

Abrading hardened concrete e.g. in scrubbling or concrete cutting, can give rise to large amounts of inhalable dust which could contain high levels of silica, depending on the aggregate that has been used. By breathing in silica dust you are at an increased risk of developing chest complaints.

### Controlling Exposure

Work in a way which minimises the amount of dust produced. So, open bags of cement with care mix carefully etc. Handle dry material in a well-ventilated area.

### Personal Protection

You must wear clothing to protect your skin from cement and cement mixtures, e.g.:

- ✓ gloves
- ✓ overalls with long sleeves and full-length trousers
- ✓ waterproof boots

### Hygiene

Personal hygiene is important. Adequate welfare facilities are available on site and you should wash your hands and face at the end of a job and before eating, drinking or smoking, and wash your hands before using the toilet.

### First Aid

Contaminated skin should be washed with cold running water as soon as possible. Particular attention should be paid to any wound which should be covered with a suitable dressing. Eye contamination should be washed with cold tap water for at least 10 minutes before you should be taken to hospital.

PRINT NAME IN FULL	SIGNATURE
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
18.	
19.	
20.	
21.	