

## Am I at risk from chemicals?

Chemical products such as sealants, adhesives, glues, epoxy resins, solvent based paints, isocyanate based foams/ paints, mineral oil and cement based products are used every day on construction sites.

However, if these chemicals products are not used safely on a construction site, then you could be at risk. The potential of chemicals products to cause harm depends on a number of factors including how dangerous they may be and how long and how often you are exposed to them.

Exposure to chemicals can result in various short and long-term health effects such as drowsiness, dizziness, dermatitis, burns, eye damage, respiratory illness/ disease, cancer, reproductive effects, liver or kidney disease.

When using chemicals products on a construction site, it is important to know how dangerous they are. It is also important to ensure that you have the necessary controls in place to keep you, your work colleagues and the environment safe.



## Do's and Don'ts when using chemicals

- Do** study the label and the safety data sheet (SDS)
- Do** read and follow the instructions before use
- Do** use any protective clothing recommended
- Do** store chemical products safely when not in use
- Do** dispose of empty containers safely
- Don't** transfer chemicals into unmarked containers
- Don't** use flammable chemicals near sources of ignition
- Don't** mix chemicals, unless you are sure they don't react
- Don't** enter area where respiratory protection is in use

## Where can I get more information?

- Your local supplier or manufacturer
- The Health and Safety Authority
  - [www.hsa.ie/chemicals](http://www.hsa.ie/chemicals)
  - [chemicals@hsa.ie](mailto:chemicals@hsa.ie)
  - 1890 289 389
- National Poisons Information Centre  
[www.poisons.ie](http://www.poisons.ie) in cases of emergency

### Further Information and Guidance:

Visit our website at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie) telephone our contact centre on **1890 289 389** or email [wcu@hsa.ie](mailto:wcu@hsa.ie)

Use BeSMART, our free online risk assessment tool at [www.besmart.ie](http://www.besmart.ie)  
Check out our range of free online courses at [www.hslearning.ie](http://www.hslearning.ie)

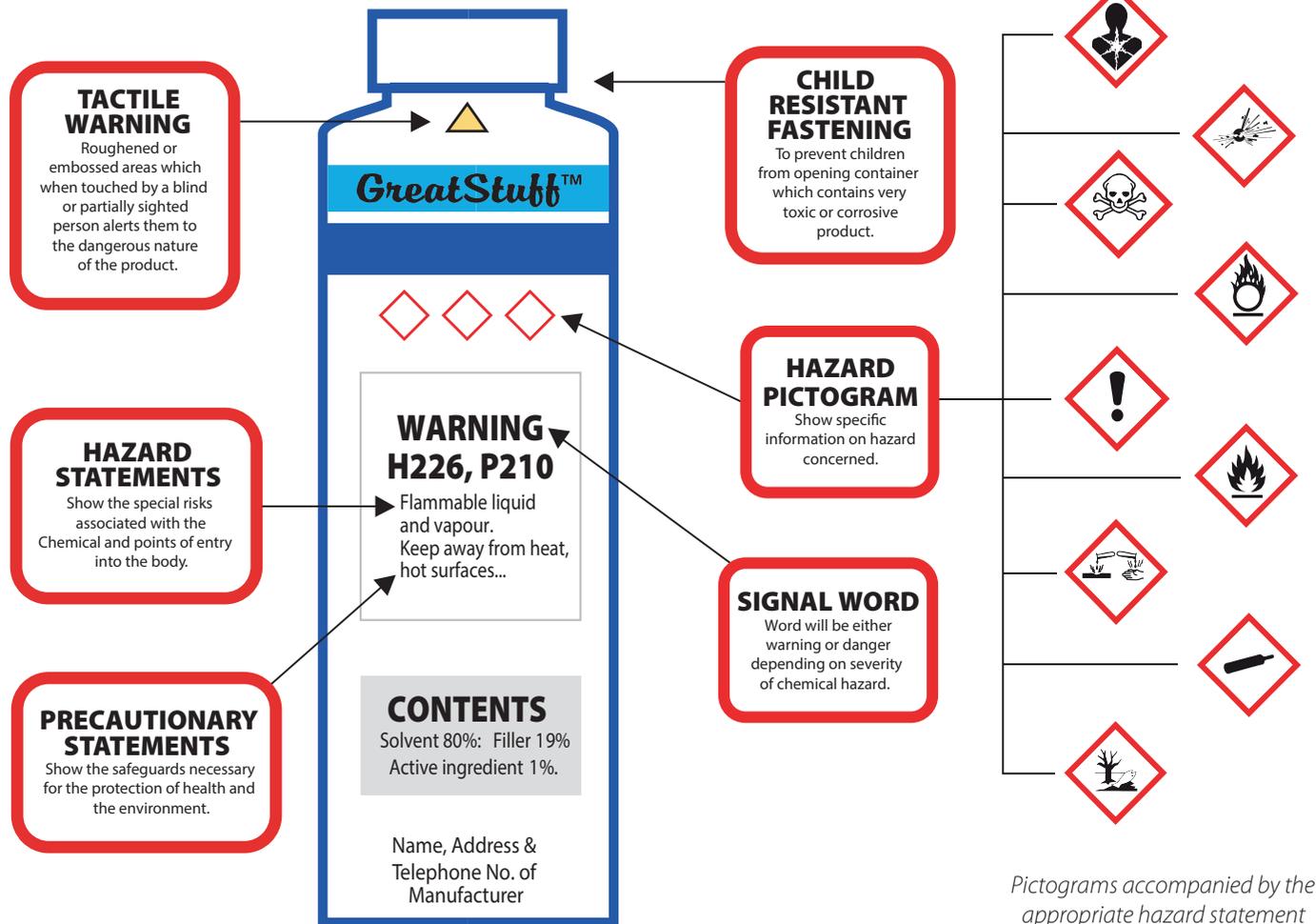


Use  
**Chemicals Safely**  
on  
construction sites



# How do I know if a chemical is dangerous?

The label on the chemical container indicates the dangerous properties of the chemical. Below is an example of a hazard label. Additional information can be found in the safety data sheet (SDS) which is supplied with the chemical (if you don't receive one, ask your supplier). The SDS provides important information about the hazards of the chemical and how to use, handle, store and dispose of it safely.



Pictograms accompanied by the appropriate hazard statement

# What do the hazard pictograms mean?

<b>DANGER</b>		Life threatening even in small amounts and brief exposure.	Handle with care.
		Causes very serious long-term health effects.	Never swallow or inhale.
		Causes skin and eye burns.	Avoid contact with skin.
<b>WARNING</b>		Destruction of metals.	Handle with care.
		Skin and eye irritation. Adverse health effects.	Don't swallow, touch or inhale.
		Damage to ozone layer.	Avoid release.
<b>DANGER</b>		Explosive- sensitive to fire, heat, vibration and friction.	Keep your distance.
		Highly flammable- serious fires if exposed to sparks, flames, heat.	Handle with care. No ignition sources.
		Causes or intensifies fire, increases fire risk.	Wear protective clothing.
<b>WARNING</b>		Container explodes if heated. Very cold liquid burns when touched.	Do not heat.
		Toxic to aquatic environment.	Do not pour down drain.