

Fulfilling COSHH Requirements

Pesticides are valuable aids to professional pest control but must be used safely. Decide to use a pesticide only after correctly identifying the pest and degree of infestation, considering alternative control methods and assessing any previous experience of the problem. Seek guidance from our expert advisors if you are in any doubt. Selecting the product: As well as cost, it is important to take into account safety and efficacy. Make sure that the proposed product is approved for the intended use; is suitable for the problem at the time of treatment; presents least risk to human health, will be prepared and applied by competent staff with the right equipment; presents minimum risk to domestic animals, fish and other wildlife, water and the environment and is packed for operator safety and convenience.

To fulfil COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) requirements, a pest control company will need to address the following; -

- i) Make sure you have safety data sheets on all products used.
- ii) Ensure that duties under the COSHH regulations are fulfilled with regard to assessing the need to use a pesticide and how risks will be controlled. The approved code of practice called “The safe use of pesticides for non-agricultural purposes” should be used to carry out these duties.
- iii) Keep a record of initial risk assessments of pest control jobs done for customers. This could, in the first instance, be a record on the customer’s order of the treatment you suggest, the product you intend to use and a reference to the Safety Data Sheet.
- iv) Keep records of the actual jobs done including which product was used, who did the treatment which areas were treated, what PPE was used, how much product was applied, revisit needs etc.
- v) Have a written record of pesticide stocks at your store and a method of updating.
- vi) Assess the hazards to health from products stored at your premises in respect of yourselves and operatives, neighbours and emergency services personnel.
- vii) Maintain records of personal protective equipment (PPE) to show when allocated, to whom, renewal/re-check date etc.
- viii) Keep a written record of training given to all employees.
- ix) Give an indication to the manager at customer’s premises of products used in treatments and leave a telephone number for contact in case of emergency.
- x) Mark your store and vehicles with the hazard symbol showing a black exclamation mark in a yellow triangle.
- xi) Ensure vehicle is properly equipped and pesticides are carried in a safe manner.
- xii) Read Guidance Note AIS 16 from the HSE on the “Guidance on storing pesticides for farmers and other professional users”.
- xiii) Consider health surveillance on workers exposed to pesticides where there is doubt concerning the adequacy of safeguards, PPE etc. against the inherent hazards of products being used.
- xiv) Get professional advice on any aspects of health and safety that you are unsure about.