

## 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)
  - 0818 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 **0818 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.hsalearning.ie](http://www.hsalearning.ie)

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Health and Safety Authority



# Use Chemicals Safely on construction sites

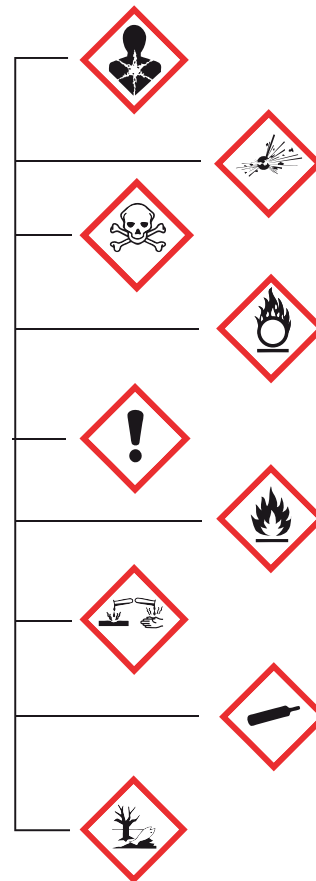
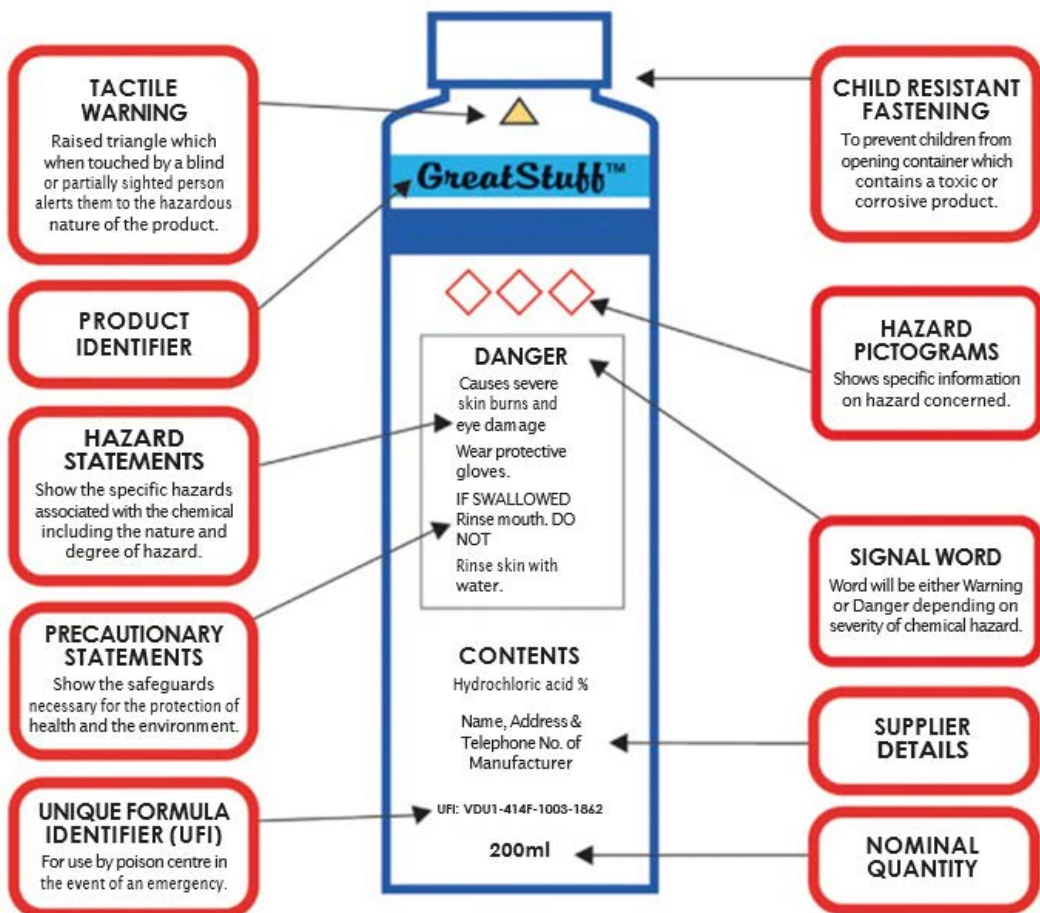
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# How do I know if a chemical is dangerous?

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?

	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
	Destruction of metals	Handle with care
	Skin and eye irritation	Don't swallow, touch or inhale
	Adverse health effects	Avoid release
	Damage to ozone layer	
	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
	Container explodes if heated. Very cold liquid burns when touched.	Do not heat!
	Very toxic to aquatic life	Do not pour down drain