

HSA TAKES ONLINE TRAINING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The Health and Safety Authority has launched a new and more detailed interactive online course on Chemical Safety in the Workplace, aimed at employers and employees, including supervisors and health and safety representatives, in any sector where chemicals are used.

Following on from the introductory Chemical Safety in the Workplace course launched in 2016, this new 30-minute course provides more detailed information on chemical hazards.

Freely available through the Authority's e-learning portal <http://hsalearning.ie> it includes information on the different range of chemical hazards and the information available to protect workers and others when using these chemicals.

Course objectives include learning about hazard pictograms, when and how to use the information contained on labels and safety data sheets (SDSs), and how to manage chemicals safely in the workplace.

At the end of this course learners should be able to:

- Recognise hazard pictograms.
- Understand hazard label information.
- Use safety data sheets to find information on hazards and protective measures.
- Understand the legal obligations of suppliers and employers.

Hazardous chemicals can be found in nearly all workplaces and their safe use is essential for health and well-being. Across Europe, millions of workers come across chemicals that may harm them.

According to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), 15 per cent of workers in Europe handle hazardous chemicals as part of their job. Health effects can range from irritation of the skin or eyes to cancers and effects on the unborn child.

Statistics on the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) website indicate that more than 100,000 deaths in the EU each year are caused by occupational cancers. EU-OSHA has noted that, therefore, it's vital that companies protect their workers, and in order to do so, they must know

how hazardous the chemicals in the workplace are and how they can be used safely.



RAISING GREATER AWARENESS

HSA Senior Chemicals Inspector Majella Cosgrave has said that 'Chemical Safety in the Workplace – Level 2' will help learners to interpret and use the information on hazard labels and SDSs.

"Employer and employees will learn about their key duties and also how chemical safety should be managed in the workplace. Employers can usefully incorporate the course into staff induction or training programmes," she added.

Meanwhile, HSA Education Manager, Joanne Harmon said that the short online course would be of interest to employers as a way of raising awareness amongst their employees of the risks from hazardous chemicals in the workplace.

"The group manager facility means that employers, managers or tutors can register groups of learners to take the course in their own time and remotely monitor their progress. Learners can take courses at their own pace and can download a certificate of completion on passing the short assessment.

"Although not a formal qualification, certification can form part of an individual's training or continuous professional development record," she added.

For details on the full range of HSA online courses, and/or register as a learner visit www.hsalearning.ie. For further information on HSA online learning email joanne_harmon@hsa.ie