

ACID AND SOLVENT CLEANING

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

Mortar residue · degreasing · descaling — product choice, dilution, splash and run-off

KD-RA-LG-004 Rev A0

Statutory basis: COSHH 2002 regs 6, 7 and 8 with HSE ACOP L5 (6th edition, 2013) for assessment, control of exposure and use of control measures; DSEAR 2002 for flammable solvent products; Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 for the PPE the assessment still requires; Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 for discharges of wash water in England and Wales — confirm the rules that apply elsewhere in the UK; CDM 2015 regs 13 and 15. This document is the recorded safe system of work required by HSWA 1974 s.2(2)(a) and MHSWR 1999 regs 3 and 5.

1 DOCUMENT AND PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

RAMS REFERENCE	PROJECT / SITE REF	SITE NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE PREPARED	NEXT REVIEW DATE
CLIENT / PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR	PLANNED START	DURATION	OPERATIVES	SUPERVISING THE WORK

2 SCOPE OF WORKS

Construction cleaning with strong chemical products: acid cleaners for mortar and cement residue on low-level brickwork and paving, alkaline and solvent degreasers on floors, plant and equipment, and descalers on sanitaryware and fittings — selection, dilution, application, neutralising and rinsing, and disposal of wash water.

This document does not cover: builders' and sparkle cleans with general products (KD-RAMS-SL-001), facade cleaning and soft washing at height (KD-RAMS-CL-004 and KD-RAMS-WK-005), cleaning inside confined spaces (KD-RA-LG-003), and any product containing hydrofluoric acid or fluoride salts — not used under this document.

SITE-SPECIFIC SCOPE, LOCATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

3 RISK ASSESSMENT — SCORE EACH RISK FOR THIS SITE, THEN ADD WHAT IS MISSING

The hazards and controls below are the starting point for this activity, written by a working main contractor. They are not complete for your site until a competent person has scored each risk, added the site-specific hazards, and struck out anything that does not apply. Rate risks High / Medium / Low before and after controls.

1. Chemical burns to skin and eyes from acids and alkalis

At risk: Operatives

Controls: The weakest product that does the job chosen from its safety data sheet and COSHH assessment, ready-diluted where available; chemical gauntlets, goggles or face shield and a waterproof apron for decanting, diluting and applying; emergency eyewash at the point of use.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

2. Mixing products — toxic gas from acid and chlorine-based cleaners

At risk: Operatives, others nearby

Controls: Products never mixed; acid and chlorine-based cleaners never used on the same surface without a full rinse between; one product per labelled bucket; products kept in their original labelled containers.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

3. Dilution errors — too strong, or mixed the wrong way round

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Diluted to the manufacturer's stated rate with a measure — add product to water, never water to product — outdoors or in a ventilated area.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

4. Inhaling vapour and mist, particularly solvent degreasers in rooms

At risk: Operatives, others in the area

Controls: Ventilation by opening up or extraction; application by brush, roller or low-pressure sprayer rather than fine mist; RPE only where the COSHH assessment still requires it, with tight-fitting masks fit-tested; others kept out until vapour has cleared.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

5. Fire from flammable solvent degreasers

At risk: Everyone in the area

Controls: Only the quantity needed for the task brought to the work; used away from hot works and ignition sources with no smoking; containers closed when not in use; used rags into metal lidded bins; the product's DSEAR assessment followed.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

6. Surface damage and unexpected reactions

At risk: Operatives, the finished work

Controls: Trial on a small hidden area first; masonry and paving wetted first, as the data sheet directs; neutralised and rinsed as the manufacturer states; glass, metals and stone the product attacks masked first.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

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7. Run-off reaching drains or ground

At risk: The environment

Controls: Surface water gullies covered; run-off collected with a wet vacuum or absorbent and disposed of by the route the data sheet and waste arrangements set; nothing discharged to a surface water drain or watercourse without an environmental permit (Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 in England and Wales; elsewhere, the rules that apply); disposal to a foul sewer only with the sewerage undertaker's trade effluent consent.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

8. Skin damage from repeated contact and wet work

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Gauntlets of the material the data sheet specifies for the product, cuffs turned so liquid cannot run inside, changed when damaged or contaminated inside; barrier creams not relied on — they give no protection against acids or alkalis; skin washed at once after any contact and skin problems reported early.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

9. Slips on wet, chemical-contaminated floors

At risk: Everyone in the area

Controls: Area coned and signed until rinsed and dry; spills cleaned up straight away.

INITIAL (H/M/L)	RESIDUAL (H/M/L)	SITE-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL CONTROLS, OR N/A	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

Site-specific hazards not listed above — every site has at least one:

HAZARD	WHO IS AT RISK	CONTROLS	INITIAL H/...	RESIDUAL...	ACTION OWNER	BY WHEN

4 METHOD — SEQUENCE OF WORK

- 1 Identify the residue and the surface; select the product from its data sheet and COSHH assessment; confirm it contains no hydrofluoric acid or fluoride salts.
- 2 Brief the assessment, PPE, first aid and spill response; bring the eyewash to the work point.
- 3 Set up the area: signs and exclusion, masking of vulnerable surfaces, surface water gullies covered.
- 4 Ventilate the area; remove ignition sources before using solvent products.
- 5 Trial on a small hidden area and check the result after the stated dwell time.
- 6 Dilute to the stated rate in a labelled container — add product to water, never water to product.
- 7 Wet masonry and paving first, as the data sheet directs; apply as the manufacturer directs and do not let the product dry on the surface.
- 8 Neutralise where the manufacturer requires, then rinse thoroughly with clean water.
- 9 Collect the run-off and dispose of it by the agreed route.
- 10 Stop on any splash to skin or eyes (flush at once and get first aid), any sign of gas or fumes, surface damage, or wind carrying spray.
- 11 Clean tools, return products to the locked store, and record what was used and where.

SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENTS TO THE SEQUENCE

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5 PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

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|--|--------------------------------------|
| Products in original labelled containers, with data sheets | Wet vacuum and absorbent for run-off |
| Measuring jugs and labelled buckets | Gully covers, masking and signage |
| Brushes, rollers and low-pressure sprayer | Metal lidded bins for solvent rags |
| Emergency eyewash | |

INSPECTION / THOROUGH EXAMINATION REFS

COSHH ASSESSMENT REFS

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6 PPE — THE LAST LINE OF CONTROL, NOT THE FIRST

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|-----------------|---------------------|---|
| Head protection | Gloves — task-rated | Chemical gauntlets, goggles or face shield and waterproof apron |
| Safety footwear | Eye protection | |
| High visibility | Hearing protection | |

RPE TYPE, FACE-FIT STATUS, AND ANY OTHER PPE REQUIRED

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7 PERMITS REQUIRED BEFORE THIS WORK STARTS

No permit is normally required for this activity. The site's own rules may still require one — check before starting, and record any permit issued below.
PERMITS ISSUED FOR THIS WORK (OR NONE)

8 EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS — COMPLETE FOR THIS SITE

FIRST AIDER AND LOCATION	NEAREST A&E	ASSEMBLY POINT
HOW THE ALARM IS RAISED	EMERGENCY ACCESS FOR THIS WORK AREA	SPILL / ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE

9 BRIEFING RECORD — EVERYONE WORKING UNDER THIS RAMS SIGNS BEFORE STARTING

By signing you confirm the contents of this RAMS have been explained to you, you understand the hazards and controls, and you will work to the sequence stated. Tell the supervisor if the work or the site does not match this document — work stops until it does.

NAME	COMPANY	SIGNATURE	DATE

10 PREPARED AND ACCEPTED

Prepared / adapted for this site by — I confirm I have adapted this document to the site, scored the risks, and that it describes how the work will actually be done.

PRINTED NAME	ROLE / COMPETENCE	COMPANY	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME

Accepted for the site by — principal contractor or site manager review.

PRINTED NAME	ROLE	COMPANY	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME

Review this RAMS if the work, the site or the law changes, and at least before each new phase of the works. Flatten the completed PDF before filing so the record cannot be silently edited.

R REVISION HISTORY

Every revision of this document, and every review that found nothing to change. The revision on the front of this sheet is the one you are holding — check kubitdocs.com for the current one before use.

Rev	Date	Class	What changed	Authorised by
D0	2026-09-11	first-issue	First issue.	— not yet approved —
A0	2026-09-11	review	Approved for issue by the author. Content unchanged from the reviewed draft; the draft status strip is removed. No independent third-party review has been carried out.	Author — director, UK principal contractor, SMSTS. Not an independent review.

Class: first-issue · material (the law, a control, a field or the scope changed — past buyers are notified) · editorial (wording or layout only) · review (checked, nothing changed) · withdrawal. Revision prefix D = draft, not approved and not for sale; A = approved for issue by the person named, on the date shown.