

CHEMICAL PAINT STRIPPING

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

Solvent and caustic strippers · heavy vapour at low level · burns · residue disposal

KD-RA-PA-004 Rev A0

Statutory basis: COSHH 2002 regs 6, 7 and 12 with HSE ACOP L5 (6th edition, 2013) — substitution with a less hazardous stripper is the first control considered, not the last; workplace exposure limits in EH40/2005 Workplace exposure limits (4th edition, 2020). DSEAR 2002 for flammable solvent strippers. MHSWR 1999 reg 16 where a stripper is classified as toxic for reproduction. Where the coating contains lead, the Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002 with ACOP L132 (3rd edition, 2002) apply to the work and the removed material. Stripper residues under the Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990 s.34 — England and Wales rules; Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own, so confirm them for the site. Work at Height Regulations 2005 for access. CDM 2015 reg 15 (and reg 13 where a principal contractor is appointed). 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

Removal of paint, varnish and other coatings from joinery, metalwork and masonry with chemical strippers — solvent-based, caustic (alkaline) and poultice types — brush, trowel or blanket applied: product selection, trial area, set-up, application and dwell, removal of softened coating, neutralising and wash-down, and disposal of residues.

This document does not cover: coatings confirmed or presumed to contain lead, which are stripped under KD-RAMS-LD-002 with this document used alongside it for the stripper hazards; textured coatings until the asbestos register confirms them (KD-RAMS-AS-002 where they contain asbestos); abrasive blasting; and heat stripping.

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. Dichloromethane (methylene chloride) vapour — narcosis and carbon monoxide in the blood

At risk: Operatives, anyone in low areas nearby

Controls: Dichloromethane vapour is heavy, collects at floor level, causes dizziness and unconsciousness, and is converted in the body to carbon monoxide. For paint stripping at transient workplaces, only people trained and holding a certificate of competence may use dichloromethane-based strippers. A stripper without it is used unless the COSHH assessment records why it cannot be. If it is used: never in basements, pits, stairwells, sheeted enclosures or small unventilated rooms; never alone; extraction at low level; minimum quantity. Respirator filters protect against dichloromethane for a very short time only; where RPE is needed it is air-fed, chosen with specialist advice.

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

2. Solvents toxic for reproduction — N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone (NMP) and similar

At risk: Operatives, particularly new and expectant mothers

Controls: Some solvent strippers contain NMP or other solvents classified as toxic for reproduction; section 2 of the safety data sheet shows it. Substitution first. Where one is used, skin contact is prevented as well as inhalation, because these solvents pass through the skin, and the assessment covers new and expectant mothers under MHSWR 1999 reg 16.

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

3. Skin and eye contact — caustic burns and solvent through gloves

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Alkaline strippers burn skin and eyes, and the burn can develop before it is felt; solvent strippers attack many glove materials. Goggles or a full visor, chemical-resistant apron, and gauntlets of the material and breakthrough time on the safety data sheet, changed at that interval and at once when soaked. Clean water or an eyewash at the workplace before opening; splashes irrigated at once as the data sheet directs; contaminated clothing removed. Products never mixed or decanted into unlabelled containers.

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

4. Fire from flammable solvent strippers

At risk: Operatives, the building

Controls: Where the safety data sheet shows a flammable product: ignition sources removed in and next to the area; minimum quantity decanted; containers closed between uses; soaked rags and scrapings in a lidded metal bin taken out every shift.

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

5. Slips on stripper residue and wet sheeting

At risk: Operatives, others passing

Controls: Containment trays or taped sheeting at the base of the work; residue scraped straight into lidded containers, not left on the floor; sheeting kept off routes others must use; the area barriered and signed until washed down and dry.

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

CHEMICAL PAINT STRIPPING

continued

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

KD-RA-PA-004 Rev A0

6. Work at height from steps, podiums, towers or MEWPs

At risk: Operatives, and anyone below

Controls: Select access by the Work at Height hierarchy — podium or tower before steps; MEWPs by trained (IPAF) operators only. Inspect access equipment before use, establish an exclusion below overhead work, and secure tools and materials against dropping.

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

7. Interface with occupants, other trades and the public

At risk: Occupants, other trades, the public

Controls: Segregate the work area — barriers, signage, sheeting; agree access routes and working hours with the occupier; never obstruct escape routes; deliveries and waste runs outside peak movement times where agreed.

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

8. Residues and wash water reaching drains or ground

At risk: The environment, waste handlers

Controls: Softened coating, stripper residue, poultice and wash water are collected and consigned as hazardous waste — never washed into sinks, drains or gullies. Externally, residue is caught on sheeting and in trays before it reaches the ground.

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

- Identify the coating and substrate; confirm the lead status and check the asbestos register. Lead-containing — work under KD-RAMS-LD-002. Textured and unconfirmed — stop.
- Select the stripper, considering substitutes first; have the safety data sheet on site and complete the COSHH assessment, including glove and RPE selection and, for dichloromethane, the operatives' certificates of competence.
- Trial a small area to confirm the product works and the dwell time before committing to the whole job.
- Set up access, ventilation at the level the assessment requires, containment trays and sheeting, water or eyewash, spill kit, lidded waste containers, signs and barriers; remove ignition sources for flammable products.
- Put on goggles or visor, gauntlets and apron or coveralls, and RPE where the assessment requires it.
- Decant the minimum quantity onto a spill tray and apply to one manageable area at a time; close containers between uses.
- Leave for the dwell time the data sheet gives, covered where it specifies, with the area kept undisturbed.
- Scrape the softened coating straight into a lidded container, working away from the body.
- Neutralise and wash down as the data sheet directs, collecting the washings; never flush to a drain.
- Stop if anyone feels dizzy, headachy or nauseous, if stripper reaches skin or eyes, or if a spill escapes containment; give first aid as the safety data sheet directs and report.
- Clear residues, rags and PPE to the hazardous waste containers and consign them; ventilate until the area is clear of vapour before others re-enter.

SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENTS TO THE SEQUENCE

--

5 PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Brushes, trowels and poultice blankets	Eyewash station or clean water supply
Scrapers and shave hooks	Lidded metal bins and hazardous waste containers
Containment trays and heavy-gauge sheeting	Podium steps or towers as the access requires
Extraction or ventilation fans	

INSPECTION / THOROUGH EXAMINATION REFS

--

COSHH ASSESSMENT REFS

--

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

--

CHEMICAL PAINT STRIPPING

continued

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

KD-RA-PA-004 Rev A0

- Head protection
- Safety footwear
- High visibility
- Gloves — task-rated
- Eye protection
- Hearing protection
- Goggles or full visor
- Chemical-resistant gauntlets to the data sheet
- Chemical-resistant apron or coveralls
- RPE as the assessment selects

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

7 PERMITS REQUIRED BEFORE THIS WORK STARTS

A permit authorises this work in that place, on that day. It extends the safe system of work in this document — it does not replace it (HSE HSG250). The site issues the permit; record its number before work starts.

KD-PTW-GP-003 — General Permit to Work

Where flammable strippers require ignition-source control in the area.

PERMIT NUMBER

KD-PTW-PE-009 — Permit to Enter

For occupied buildings under access control.

PERMIT NUMBER

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.

CHEMICAL PAINT STRIPPING

continued

ACTIVITY RAMS — ADAPT TO SITE BEFORE USE

KD-RA-PA-004 Rev A0

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.