

Statutory basis: COSHH 2002 — wood dust is a substance hazardous to health and hardwood dust a carcinogen: exposure is assessed and prevented or adequately controlled under regs 6 and 7, against the workplace exposure limits in EH40/2005 (4th edition, 2020) — the limit is never exceeded, and exposure is reduced below it as far as reasonably practicable; extraction maintained and thoroughly examined and tested under reg 9, following HSE HSG258 (3rd edition, 2017); health surveillance under reg 11 for those regularly exposed to wood dust; RPE selected following HSE HSG53 (4th edition, 2013) and fit tested following HSE INDG479 (2019); RIDDOR 2013 reg 8 — diagnosed occupational asthma is reportable; 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

Control of dust when cutting, routing, drilling and sanding hardwoods, tropical and exotic species, sensitising softwoods such as western red cedar, and MDF and other wood-based boards on site: identifying what is being cut, extraction on every tool, RPE, clean-down, and health surveillance for the people exposed.

This document does not cover: the general dust controls already built into first fix, second fix and floor sanding (KD-RAMS-CJ-001, KD-RAMS-CJ-002 and KD-RAMS-CJ-005), preservative-treated timber (KD-RA-CA-004), and fixed woodworking machinery in a workshop (workshop assessment).

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. Hardwood dust — a carcinogen that causes cancer of the nose and sinuses

At risk: Operatives cutting and sanding, others in the area

Controls: EH40/2005 sets 3 mg/m³ for hardwood dust and 5 mg/m³ for softwood dust as 8-hour averages, and marks hardwood dust as a carcinogen and sensitiser. The limit is never exceeded, and exposure is reduced below it as far as reasonably practicable. Components pre-cut or machined off site where they can be; on-tool extraction on every power tool; hand tools for small trims.

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

2. Occupational asthma and rhinitis from wood dust, highest with sensitising species

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Everyone regularly exposed to wood dust is under health surveillance by a competent occupational health provider; those working sensitising species — western red cedar and iroko among them — are the higher-risk group. The species is identified before it is cut, and sensitising species are cut only with extraction and RPE. Anyone with wheeze, breathlessness, a streaming nose or sore eyes at work reports it and is referred before carrying on.

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

3. Mixed, unknown and manufactured boards — MDF, plywood and reclaimed timber

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Where hardwood and softwood dusts are mixed, EH40/2005 applies the hardwood limit to all of it. MDF and boards of unknown or mixed species are treated as hardwood. The board's safety data sheet is checked for the resin binder, which is assessed as well.

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

4. Skin irritation and dermatitis from the dust and sap of some timbers

At risk: Operatives

Controls: Long sleeves and gloves when handling and machining species the supplier or data sheet flags; dust washed off at breaks; skin symptoms reported and the species recorded.

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

5. Extraction that is not working — wrong class, blocked filter, split hose or airflow alarm ignored

At risk: Operatives

Controls: M-class extractor matched to each tool, with the right hose and adaptor. Airflow indicator checked before each use and the alarm never silenced. Filters and bags emptied by the manufacturer's method into sealed bags, never shaken out. Extraction maintained, and thoroughly examined and tested under COSHH 2002 reg 9, with the record kept.

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

6. RPE that does not protect — poor fit, stubble, wrong type or worn too long

At risk: Operatives

Controls: FFP3 disposable or half-mask with P3 filters, as the COSHH assessment specifies. Every wearer face-fit tested for the model they use and clean-shaven where the mask seals; a fit check each time it is put on; disposables not reused beyond the shift. RPE backs up extraction; it does not replace it.

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

7. Dust re-suspended by dry sweeping, brushing or compressed air

At risk: Operatives, others in the area

Controls: Clean-down by M-class vacuum only; no dry sweeping and no compressed air to blow down tools, surfaces or clothing; dust not left to build up on ledges, sills and cable trays; clean-down at the end of each task, not the end of the week.

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

8. Occupants and other trades breathing the dust

At risk: Occupants, other trades

Controls: Cutting station segregated, away from other trades and ventilation intakes; sheeting and closed doors where cutting is inside an occupied area; dusty work timed with the occupier; the area vacuumed before others return.

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 every timber and board species to be cut from the delivery note or supplier. Get the safety data sheets for boards and for any species flagged as a sensitiser or irritant.
- 2 Brief the COSHH assessment: which materials are hardwood or sensitisers, the extraction and RPE for each, and how to report symptoms.
- 3 Ask for components to be pre-cut or machined off site where practicable, and plan site cutting to the minimum.
- 4 Set up the cutting station, segregated from other trades, with the extractor matched to each tool.
- 5 Pre-use check: extractor airflow indicator, hose, adaptors and filter; RPE fit check. A failed check means no cutting until it is put right.
- 6 Cut, rout, drill and sand only with extraction connected and running on the tool.
- 7 STOP cutting if the extractor alarms, visible dust escapes, or anyone reports symptoms. Do not carry on relying on RPE alone.
- 8 Vacuum as each task finishes. Empty extractors by the manufacturer's method into sealed bags.
- 9 Wash hands and face before breaks and eating; remove dusty outer clothing before entering the welfare facilities.
- 10 Keep face-fit test records, extraction examination records and the health surveillance arrangements on site. Refer anyone reporting symptoms the same week.

SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENTS TO THE SEQUENCE

5 PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

- M-class on-tool extractors with airflow indicators
- Saws, routers and sanders with extraction ports
- Segregated cutting station

- M-class vacuum for clean-down
- Sealable bags for extracted dust

INSPECTION / THOROUGH EXAMINATION REFS

COSHH ASSESSMENT REFS

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

- Head protection
- Safety footwear
- High visibility
- Gloves — task-rated
- Eye protection
- Hearing protection
- FFP3 RPE (face-fit tested) for hardwood and sensitising species
- Long sleeves and gloves for species that irritate the skin

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

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.