

# Health and safety

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Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work *etc* Act 1974<sup>1</sup> requires a risk assessment to be carried out before hazardous chemicals are used or made, harmful microorganisms used or a hazardous procedure is carried out. Risk assessment is the responsibility of the employer, usually the LEA or governing body. The task of assessing risk in particular situations may well be delegated by the employer to the Head of Science, who will be expected to operate within the employer's guidelines. Most education employers have adopted various nationally available texts as the basis for their model risk assessments. Those commonly used include the following:

*Safeguards in the School Laboratory*, 10th edition, ASE<sup>2</sup>, 1996

*Topics in Safety*, 3rd edition, ASE<sup>2</sup>, 2001

*Hazcards*, CLEAPSS<sup>3</sup>, 1995 (or 1998, 2000 updates)

*Laboratory Handbook*, CLEAPSS<sup>3</sup>, 1997 (or 2001 update) or *Shorter Handbook*, CLEAPSS, 2000

*Safety in Science Education*, DfEE, HMSO, 1996

*Hazardous Chemicals Manual*, SSERC<sup>3</sup>, 1997 (or CDROM version, 1998)

*Be safe! Health and safety in primary school science and technology*, 3rd edition, ASE<sup>2</sup>, 2001

If your employer has adopted one or more of these publications, you should follow the guidance given there, subject only to a need to check whether modification is needed to deal with the special situation in your class/school. We have outlined safety considerations for the practical activities given on this CDROM. However, teachers must still verify that what is proposed does conform to any code of practice produced by their employer, and make a suitable record e.g. by annotating schemes of work. They need to consider local circumstances. For example, does the fume cupboard work satisfactorily? Will the behaviour of some pupils make the activity unsafe? Does the teacher have adequate training?

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<sup>1</sup>The COSHH Regulations and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

<sup>2</sup>ASE publications are available to order from ASE Headquarters, College Lane, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9AA  
Tel: 01707 283000 Web: [www.ase.org.uk](http://www.ase.org.uk)

<sup>3</sup>CLEAPSS and SSERC publications are available only to members.

CLEAPSS School Science Service, Brunel University, Uxbridge UB8 3PH Tel: 01895 251496 Web: [www.cleapss.org.uk](http://www.cleapss.org.uk)

SSERC, St. Mary's Building, 23 Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AE Tel: 0131 558 8180 Web: [www.sserc.org.uk](http://www.sserc.org.uk)