Control wood dust

Overview

This standard covers the skills and knowledge required to control wood dust in the workplace.

It includes:

1. types of wood dust
2. causes of high wood dust exposure
3. controlling wood dust
4. local exhaust ventilation (LEV) design and management
5. checking local exhaust ventilation (LEV) controls

Wood dust is flammable and, in certain situations, can cause a fire or explosion. Every year premises are severely damaged or destroyed by wood dust fires that usually start in dust extraction equipment. Wood dust explosions in buildings are rare, except in the chipboard industry.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments in line with health and safety regulations and legislation
2. prevent and control exposure to wood dust following standard operating procedures
3. apply the principles of good practice for the control of exposure to wood dust
4. consult relevant colleagues when assessing risks and making decisions about control measures
5. implement wood dust control measures following health and safety regulations and legislation
6. check workplace exposure limits have not been exceeded following health and safety regulations and legislation
7. control wood dust exposure following health and safety regulations and legislation
8. check and maintain local exhaust ventilation (LEV) following health and safety regulations and legislation
9. display plans in the workplace showing combinations of local exhaust ventilation (LEV) hoods following national guidelines
10. manage local exhaust ventilation (LEV) controls to maintain system performance following health and safety regulations and legislation and manufacturers instructions
11. select fans and air cleaners following health and safety regulations and legislation
12. check local exhaust ventilation (LEV) controls are working following health and safety regulations and legislation and manufacturers instructions
13. check hoods and ductwork for damage or blockages following manufacturers instructions
14. check the condition of filters and clean following manufacturers instructions
15. check airflow following health and safety regulations and legislation and manufacturers instructions

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. relevant health and safety legislation and regulations
2. types of wood dust
3. why it is necessary to control wood dust
4. serious and non-reversible health problems that can be caused by wood dust
5. activities that are likely to produce high dust exposures
6. principles of good practice for the control of dust exposure
7. workplace exposure limits (WEL)
8. requirements of local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems used in woodworking
9. basic design principles of local exhaust ventilation (LEV)
10. how to check that local exhaust ventilation (LEV) is working properly
11. controlling wood dust exposure
12. maximum number of hoods that fans can extract from and still control the dust.
13. training requirements for operators, supervisors and managers
14. reasons why local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems fail to control dust emissions and exposure
15. requirements of fans and air cleaners
16. ways to check local exhaust ventilation (LEV) controls are working
17. ways to check hoods and ductwork for damage or blockages
18. ways to check the condition of filters and cleaning procedures
19. ways to check airflow

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