

THE INSTITUTE OF PETROLEUM

APPLICATION OF CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES
HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (COSHH)
REQUIREMENTS FOR CARCINOGENS
AT OIL REFINERIES AND TERMINALS

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INTRODUCTION

Refineries are complex installations which normally consist of a series of process units, with supporting storage tanks, waste treatment plants, boiler and power plants, engineering and maintenance workshops, as well as laboratory, kitchen and office facilities etc. A large variety of products, by-products, intermediates, chemicals, catalysts, and refinery streams can be received, produced, tested and/or stored at such locations. Some of these can be classified as carcinogens or contain carcinogenic classified materials.

Petroleum terminals typically have receipt, storage and loading facilities for gasoline, distillates and possibly heavy fuels, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and/or solvents. In addition, chemicals such as those used for laboratory quality control testing, general cleaning operations, water treatment or in vehicle maintenance or general workshops, can also be present and may include carcinogenic classified materials.

The aim of this document is to give guidance on the health protection aspects of the handling of such carcinogenic materials, in accordance with ‘The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 1994 SI 3246’ (1) and the ‘Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and Control of Carcinogenic Substances Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs)’ (2).

Regulation 2 of COSHH defines the meaning of the term ‘carcinogen’ as including: substances and preparations which if classified in accordance with regulation 5 of the Chemical (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 1994 (3), along with those listed in Schedule 8 of COSHH, would require labelling with the risk phrases R45 (May cause cancer) or R49 (May cause cancer by inhalation). Further guidance and a list of defined substances, preparations and processes are also given in Part 4, Appendix 5 of the ‘Occupational Exposure Limits’ (4) EH40 document which is published annually by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The format of this guideline is based on that used by the United Kingdom Petroleum Industries Association (UKPIA) in their useful and informative guidance note “Petrol at Retail Filling Stations - Application of COSHH Carcinogens ACOP” (5) to whom grateful acknowledgements are duly given.