

Latex Gloves

The Health and Safety Executive have issued new guidance on the use of latex gloves. Because of the high risk of allergy from the use of latex gloves and the possible serious health consequences the use of latex should be limited to circumstances where suitable substitutes are not available.

At present there is not a total ban on the use of latex gloves but there is a need to justify use based on risk assessment.

To comply with the legal regulations the assessment should consider:

- Eliminating the risk where appropriate – gloves should only be worn where there is a risk of infection.
- Substituting to other glove materials where appropriate – nitrile, vinyl, synthetic.
- Limiting exposure – HSE’s policy for this:

“Single use, disposable natural rubber latex gloves may be used where a risk assessment has identified them as necessary. When they are used they must be low-protein and powder-free.”

Health Surveillance

As NRL produces a risk of asthma and dermatitis health surveillance is appropriate. The extent and detail of the health surveillance should be related to the degree of risk identified during the COSHH assessment and determined in consultation with Occupational Health. These health surveillance checks should be regular, and they should be recorded.

The HSE expect the Employer to provide guidance and information necessary to protect against the risks to health of natural rubber latex products. The Employer must provide alternative Types of gloves, for use where gloves are necessary.