

# Navigating the chemical guideline

The [Chemical management guideline](#) is large because it covers a wide range of chemical topics across all departmental workplaces.

You can **click on your topic of interest in the table of contents to navigate directly to the relevant section.**

## What does the department say I need to do with chemicals in my workplace?

Department employees are to follow any [policies and procedures](#) provided by the department. Mandatory chemical management requirements are provided in the [Chemical management procedure](#).

Practical assistance to help implement the procedure is provided in the:

- [Chemical management guideline](#)
  - Part 1 - steps out how to manage chemicals throughout their lifecycle in line with procedural requirements
  - Part 2 - provides information about chemical hazards and managing their risks
- [Chemical management online course](#)

**What chemicals are banned from use?** See the [prohibited and high risk chemicals list](#).

## Finding answers in the guideline

**What chemicals can I purchase?** You can select any chemical you require to complete a task as long as:

- it is not on the [prohibited chemical list](#)
- it does not require health monitoring (section 1.3.7)
- you have explored the availability of a less hazardous, fit-for-purpose substance
- you have looked at the availability of a less hazardous, fit for purpose substance



You must then use the [pre-purchase chemical risk assessment](#) to help make the final decision. Assessment *before you buy the product* helps ensure you are not introducing any significant new hazards into the workplace and the risks of storing, handling, using and disposing of the chemical can be managed.

**What is a hazardous chemical register and do I need one?** The legislation requires you to have a hazardous chemical register. Section 1.3.4 tells you what you need to know. You can access a register for your work area from Chemwatch - simply follow the instructions on Chemwatch user [module 6a](#).



**Do I need a safety data sheet (SDS)?** Yes. You need a manufacturer's SDS for each chemical you purchase for your workplace. An SDS provides information about the hazardous nature

of chemicals and their safe management. Section 1.1.1 outlines SDS requirements. It is very important that chemical users know how to access (see Chemwatch user [module 6b](#)), and [interpret an SDS](#).

**Do I need labels on my chemicals?** Yes! You need a label on every chemical container because labels are the first place you look for hazard information. Sections 1.5.1 and 2.2 outline label requirements. Labels are important not just for you, but for the safety of everyone who comes into contact with the chemical.

**When do I have to do a risk assessment when using chemicals?**

The department requires that a pre-purchase chemical risk assessment is completed for all chemicals. Use these assessments to manage initial hazards for all chemicals, then refer to them for the ongoing management of consumer and Chemwatch 'grey', 'blue' and 'yellow' hazard category chemicals. In addition, you must also complete and print Chemwatch ILO and UN risk assessments for all 'orange' and 'red' chemicals. Section 1.4 outlines risk assessment requirements and section 2.3 provides general risk management information for the safe handling, storage, use and disposal of all hazardous chemicals



**What is placarding and when do I need to do it?** Placarding is safety signage used to advise of bulk storage of chemicals classed as dangerous goods (DG). These chemicals have significant physical risks e.g. fire and/or explosion, toxicity or corrosiveness etc. Sections 1.3.5 and Appendix 1 provides advice on why, when and how to placard. Workplaces with swimming pools, fuel depots, bulk agricultural chemicals and LP gas may need to placard their storage. Use Chemwatch (see [module 6d](#)) to identify any placard needs.

**How do I dispose of chemical waste?** Disposal methods are identified prior to purchase and recorded on your pre-purchase assessment. Appendix 6 has a disposal chart and a template to help you to compile a disposal manifest to obtain quotes and prepare any waste for licenced contractors to remove.

**How do I manage chemical spills?** Each workplace is required to have an emergency plan. This plan should include chemical spill response strategies. You should also have spill kits specific to the type of chemicals you use. The kits are to be located close to where chemicals are stored and used. Spill kits can be purchased from science suppliers and safety shops or put together yourself. Section 2.7 contains guidance on spill kit contents.



It is helpful to develop [safe operating procedures](#) (SOPs; section 1,.4.3) for specific chemicals to manage spill clean-ups. SOPs can also be useful to advise and train workers in correct spill response.

**Can I transport chemicals in my own vehicle?** It is the department's preference that employee's private vehicles are NOT used for the transport of chemicals. Section 2.3.7 and 2.3.8 cover the transport requirements of small quantities of chemicals if you have management approval to do so.

**Can I spray herbicides?** You might need an ACDC licence to spray herbicides in certain

areas of Queensland. See Appendix 10. Remember that schools officers are [prohibited](#) from using S6 and S7 poisons for pest management.

More chemical resources can be found on the department's [Chemicals and Hazardous Substances](#) webpage and the [Oneportal Health and Safety Initiatives page](#).

## ChemWATCH

ChemWATCH (GoldFFX) is an online chemical database that provides a number of helpful chemical management features. You can access a FFX FAQ factsheet [here](#). Information for using Chemwatch as a risk management tool can be found section 1.4.2.

The department has an online subscription to ChemWATCH that each workplace can access through the [Chemicals and Hazardous substances](#) section of the [Creating Healthier Workplaces](#) website. The database itself can be opened [here](#). You can find helpful task based Chemwatch [user modules](#) that are specific to department requirements here.

## Stocktake

**Do I need to complete a stock take at least annually?** Yes! Knowing what you have, where it is and how much you have helps you work efficiently and also keep the workplace safe from chemical risks. Stocktake is also used to update Chemwatch to ensure your compliance, chemical 'admin' and management practices remain up to date. Section 1.6.2 provides information on stocktake.



## Further information

If you have further enquiries about the management and safe use of chemicals or you would like advice or assistance on chemical related matters, please contact your line manager, workplace Health and Safety Advisor (HSA) or your regional [Health and Safety Consultant](#).