

Health and Safety Office, NUI Galway

GUIDANCE NOTE

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE

- Wash hands (wrists, and arms if necessary) before eating, drinking, smoking, using the telephone, taking medication, applying cosmetics and hand creams, inserting contact lenses.
- Cover all new and existing cuts and grazes with waterproof dressings and/or gloves before starting work. If cuts and grazes occur, wash immediately with soap and running water and apply waterproof dressing.
- Take rest breaks and meal breaks away from main work areas.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing to stop personal contamination, e.g. waterproof/water-resistant protective clothing, plastic aprons, gloves, rubber boots/disposable overshoes. Ensure its safe disposal or cleaning.
- Avoid hand-mouth and hand-eye contact; don't put pens/pencils in mouths.
- Dispose safely all contaminated waste.

Supplementary Controls

- If the work activity could result in a skin piercing/cutting injury, the risk of puncture wounds, cuts or grazes should be controlled by avoiding the use of sharp objects, e.g. needles, glass, metal, knives, etc. If this is impossible, safe working practices for handling and disposal of sharps should be used and appropriate protective equipment provided.
- If the work activity could result in the splashing of any body fluid, the eyes and the mouth should be protected with a visor or goggles/safety glasses and a mask.
- If the work activity could generate aerosols of either dust or liquid, you should take steps to avoid their generation, by:
 - Altering the work activity, e.g. using a vacuum rather a brush to clean a dusty workplace;
 - Using a containment facility to contain and capture the aerosols;
 - If these are impossible, then appropriate respiratory personal protective equipment should be used.