

Working with concrete

Concrete mixing and pouring is a PC responsibility, but PDS and D's need to understand the health risks associated with wet concrete when brought into contact with people.

Contact with concrete can cause both dermatitis and burns. Skin affected by dermatitis feels itchy and sore, and looks red, scaly and cracked.

Cement is capable of causing dermatitis by two mechanisms - irritancy and allergy.

- Wet cement can cause burns if wet cement becomes trapped against the skin, for example by kneeling in it or if cement falls into a boot or glove, a serious burn or ulcer can rapidly develop.
- All operatives must wear a full type suit or suitable coveralls to protect skin when working with concrete.
- Operatives must wear wellingtons under the suit. Trousler bottoms to be either taped to the wellingtons or ensure the bottoms of the trousers are tightly fitted (elasticated) to prevent concrete contamination.
- No wet clothing is to be worn and there should be no exposed skin.
- Operatives must not kneel in concrete.
- Clean drinking water must be available at the workplace and clearly marked as such in order to wash off any splashes etc.
- All personnel placing concrete must wear the correct type of gloves to prevent absorption of wet concrete.
- All personnel must wear correct eye protection to prevent splashes entering the eye.
- All personnel must be aware of the health effects of concrete burns.

