

Cross Contamination

COMPANY NAME

JOB NAME

DATE

Cross contamination occurs when workers spread contaminants around the worksite and into their homes by soiled clothing, shoes, and skin contact. Contaminants can be transferred to the items workers touch, sit on or walk on. Using good personal hygiene at work by hand washing, showering, and changing dirty clothing and shoes can help prevent cross contamination.

Workers that handle chemicals and contaminants in the workplace are aware that the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, safety glasses, respirators, coveralls, and boots, can reduce or eliminate their exposures. PPE can act as a barrier against the contaminants and protect the worker. If, however, a worker does not properly wash, remove or decontaminate soiled PPE and skin after leaving the work area, they can spread the contaminants outside the industrial work zone, to themselves, their coworkers, and to their family, homes, and cars.

The spread of contaminants is hazardous when unprotected workers, coworkers or family members come into contact with dirty surfaces. Skin exposures occur if they touch a soiled surface, and accidental ingestion can occur if they eat or drink something that has been contaminated. The contaminants of concern include chemicals such as solvents, herbicides, and pesticides, and industrial materials such as lead, asbestos and fiberglass. Potentially infectious materials such as blood and other body fluids pose a bloodborne pathogen hazard. Field workers should be aware that they can contact and spread irritating plant oils from poison ivy and poison oak.

When workers hug family members, prepare food, and touch the furniture, bedding, and carpet in the home, they could contaminate them if they have not washed their skin and removed or decontaminated soiled clothing and PPE. Workers can contaminate their coworkers and the worksite when they contact areas such as the break room, restroom, and office areas. Workers can also increase their own exposures if they eat, drink or smoke before washing their hands and removing or cleaning their PPE.

Cross contamination of the workplace can be prevented by removing or decontaminating PPE and washing hands before exiting the work zone. To prevent cross contamination at home, workers should wash their hands and faces at the end of a work shift and change into clean clothes and shoes. Workers can also take a shower and wash their hair before leaving work or as soon as they get home. Work clothes should be washed in hot water, separately from the family clothing, and given two rinse cycles.

Meeting Attended By:

Supervisor's Signature :

Date:
