

Local Exhaust Ventilation - Compliance with the COSHH Regulations

How Tecomak can help Schools and Colleges meet their duty of care.

The COSHH Regulations

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended) employers are legally obliged to assess and control the exposure of hazardous materials to their workforce, contractors and visitors to their premises.



What does the legislation require you to do?

The COSHH regulations apply to every employer that either uses or produces hazardous substances in the workplace, such as vapours from glue or paint or the fumes generated when conducting chemical experiments. They apply to substances and materials that have already been classified as 'very toxic', 'toxic', 'harmful', 'corrosive' or 'irritant', and nuisance materials such as limestone and plaster of paris.



One method of controlling hazardous substances may be to install a [local exhaust ventilation](#) (LEV) system.

What is a LEV system?

LEV systems remove airborne hazardous materials. They range from an individually ventilated cabinet to a multi-point system that operates throughout the site. LEVs capture hazardous or toxic substances at source before they can enter the breathing zone of the person using it. This minimises their release into the environment and protects the health and safety of people both inside and outside the workplace.



COSHH Regulation 9

COSHH regulation 9 states that where a LEV system is in place there is a requirement to thoroughly examine and test the system at least once every 14 months to ensure that it is in good working order. The tests must be recorded and kept for at least five years. Whoever carries out this work must be a competent person and have had sufficient training and experience.

Expectations of Schools and Colleges for COSHH Compliance

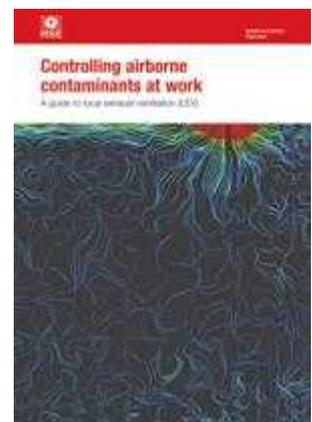
Schools and Colleges have to comply with the same legislation that apply to businesses large and small. Whilst the potential exposure levels may differ considerably from an industrial production environment the performance requirements for an LEV system are the same.

COSHH regulations haven't changed since 2002 however, inspections in schools are now more thorough and the expectations for compliance in terms of LEV performance and documentation are higher than they were 10 years ago.

HSG 258' 'Controlling airborne contaminants at work'

The publication of HSG 258 by the HSE in 2008 has clarified a number of issues and provides a framework for suppliers of LEV and of their clients as employers. The latest edition, published in 2011 is now available for free download:

<http://books.hse.gov.uk/hse/public/saleproduct.jsf?catalogueCode=9780717664153>



Thorough Examination and Test – The Routine Inspection of LEV Systems

To comply with COSHH Regulation 9, all LEV systems require thorough examination and test at least every 14 months. In practice, this is normally taken to mean annually although the frequency can reduce to monthly for some systems.

A thorough examination and test is 'a detailed and systematic examination sufficient to ensure that the LEV can continue to perform as intended by design and will contribute to the adequate control of exposure' (HSH 258, Section 327)

Key Legal Requirements:

- Every employer's LEV system requires statutory 'thorough examination and testing' by a **competent person**.
- The examination and testing report should have a prioritised list of any remedial actions for the employer.
- The employer's engineer and person responsible for health and safety both need to see the report.
- There are specific requirements for inspection reports which must be comprehensive and kept for at least 5 years.

There are three stages:

- Stage 1: A thorough visual examination to verify the LEV is in efficient working order, in good repair and in a clean condition.
- Stage 2: Measuring and examining the technical performance to check conformity with commissioning or other sources of relevant information.
- Stage 3: Assessment to check the control of worker exposure is adequate.



Competence of Examiners

The COSHH Regulations require that employers ensure anyone who carries out work in connection with the employer's duties under the COSHH Regulations has suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training.

You must ensure that anyone who designs, selects, checks and maintains the LEV system and carries out the thorough examination and test is competent. They should have the knowledge, skills and experience to do the job properly.

Tecomak takes training and expertise seriously. All our test engineers hold the BOHS P601 qualification. We also have P602 qualified engineers to design new systems and modifications to existing ones. Our senior staff are engineering graduates with over 10 years of industry experience.



Tecomak Service For Schools & Colleges

Whilst there are many companies offering LEV testing, very few have a dedicated business unit to ensure the specific needs of schools and colleges are fully met. How we help you:

- We buy and stock spares (air filters, motors, drive belts etc) in bulk to ensure best value.
- Looking after over 900 schools, we schedule visits to reduce travelling costs.
- We test filters properly and only recommend replacements when actually required.
- We ensure recommended improvements reflect the level of use and application.
- Reports are concise and professionally written to ensure results and recommendations are clear.
- Timely reminders when testing is due to ensure continued COSHH compliance.
- Free electronic copies of archived reports (held for 10 years).
- Fixed priced contracts for up to 5 years available.

Tecomak offer a complete test and maintenance solution for Schools, Colleges and Universities for all types of Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) System.