

# • HAZARD WARNING •

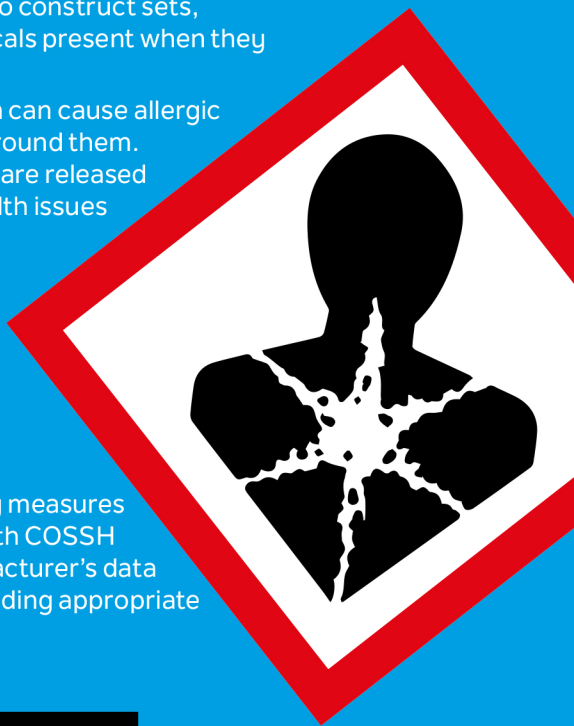
## If you work in the film and television industry be aware of the potential health risks working with and around spray foams...

With the increased use of spray foams to construct sets, controls are essential due to the chemicals present when they are sprayed, cut and trimmed.

Spray foams contain isocyanates which can cause allergic reactions for both the user and those around them. Even after cutting or abrasion, vapours are released along with airborne dust particles. Health issues related to exposure are:

- Occupational asthma
- Breathing problems
- Chest pains
- Nose and throat irritation
- Eye irritation
- Allergic skin reaction

It is essential to have appropriate safety measures and effective controls that are in line with COSHH regulations and advice from the manufacturer's data sheets. Prior to spraying, cutting or sanding appropriate risk assessments must be carried out.



**MORE INFO/JOIN**

**[bectu.org.uk/join](https://bectu.org.uk/join)**

*For queries and to report  
issues please email:  
[foamsealant@bectu.org.uk](mailto:foamsealant@bectu.org.uk)*

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The spraying and the curing process used in tasks like creating structures and sculptures can produce very high exposure to isocyanates.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations say that workers must be protected against the risks from isocyanates and other harmful substances.

This means that a COSHH risk assessment must be carried out. The head of department is responsible for ensuring that a suitable and sufficient COSHH risk assessment is completed and that the controls such as work methods, Personal Protective Equipment and welfare are effective.

Risks need to be controlled when foam and foam sealants are used in confined spaces or in bulk.

The range of products that contain isocyanate and the tasks they are used for means specific controls must be put in place which reflect assessment of the risks.

- **Eliminate or reduce isocyanate risks** – where possible consider using alternative products that do not contain isocyanates.
- **Avoid unnecessary spraying** – use the minimum amount of the product as possible.
- **Be aware of anyone who is already sensitised to isocyanates** – keep them away from the work.

- **Ventilation** – make sure there is enough fresh air in the work area. Use local exhaust ventilation when using the product if possible. The higher the risk, the better the ventilation will need to be.
- **Eye protection** – wear eye protection when doing work where splashes/aerosol may get into the eyes.
- **Gloves** – gloves should be right for the products you are using – single use disposable gloves made of suitable materials (eg nitrile) are preferable. You may need gauntlet-style gloves to prevent skin exposure.
- **Overalls** – disposable overalls are preferred. Launder significantly contaminated reusable overalls before wearing them again.
- **Washing** – good washing facilities are essential. Wash off any product on the skin as soon as possible. Do not use solvents to do this. Workers should be encouraged to wash exposed skin at breaks and after finishing work.
- **Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)** – basic face masks should always be worn. You may need more extensive RPE where ventilation does not provide enough control – particularly in enclosed spaces. Wearers should be fit tested where needed. It is particularly important to select the correct filter. Change them at suitable intervals. Check with your supplier if you're not sure.
- **First aid** – give adequate and appropriate first aid treatment to anyone affected by isocyanates. You may also need to seek further medical attention.

*If you have concerns about the use of these products in the workplace email us in strictest confidence [foamsealant@bectu.org.uk](mailto:foamsealant@bectu.org.uk)*

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