



CARE GUIDANCE

RECOMMENDATIONS ON BEST PRACTICE

LEVEL 3

Good practice in HTIW materials warehouse



GOOD PRACTICE IN HTIW MATERIALS WAREHOUSE

INTRODUCTION

This is a level 3 document in the ECFIA CARE Guidance series and should be read in conjunction with the level 1 document "Working with HTIW – Effective Risk Management".

This document describes the measures needed to reduce (as far as is possible) fibrous dust exposure of the workers in a warehouse where HTIW materials are stored.

WHAT IS THE CARE PROGRAMME?

ECFIA's Controlled And Reduced Exposure (CARE) Programme is an important part of the Product Stewardship Programme. It allows employers to proactively minimize fibrous dust exposure and thus protect workers' health.

WHAT ARE THE CARE GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS?

These documents form a comprehensive library of information on the safe handling and use of HTIW products. They have been written by industry experts and are designed to give customers of ECFIA members helpful information to put in place effective controls to minimise exposure to airborne fibres. This series of documents will progressively grow as new documents are produced.

Level 1 guidance document: "Working with HTIW - Effective risk management"

Level 2 guidance documents: Risk management measures applicable to HTIW

Level 3 guidance documents: Examples of specific applications

FIRST PRINCIPLES

When this document refers to handling of products, handling the minimum sealed packaging unit is meant. A standard packaging unit as commonly used in industry is expected to be adequately sealed.

Damaged packaging or incorrectly sealed packaging can lead to fibrous dust exposure of warehouse workers and the exposure of downstream users. Exposure can be prevented by reducing the risk of damaged or incorrectly sealed packaging present in the warehouse by implementing general good warehouse practices.

Also the warehouse should be ensuring correct communication to customers by guaranteeing that the materials have correct and visible labels (see labelling HTIW products; www.label.ecfia.eu).

EXAMPLES OF CORRECTLY SEALED PACKAGING



TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

All workers should be trained in safe systems of work within the warehouse.

Workers should have ready access to safe handling documentation, safety data sheets (SDS) and standard operating procedures in the work area where HTIW is handled. The number of handling activities in each work process should be minimised as much as possible.

Training should be given to all members of the workforce. It is essential that safety training is included in the induction programme of new employees and that they understand their role in the prevention of exposure to fibrous dust and in communication within the supply chain. Training regarding this topic should be repeated and should be part of regular safety meetings, discussions, toolbox talks, etc.

WAREHOUSE PLANNING AND LAYOUT

In order to minimise fibrous dust exposure from HTIW materials, the following measures can be implemented in warehouse planning and layout:

1. Determine minimum – maximum stock and check against warehouse capacity.
2. Align the selling quantity with the minimum sealed packaging unit to avoid unnecessary repacking activities.
3. Determine storage location and storage height for the different products; also indicate the location where non-conforming products, damaged packaging, waste etc. will be stored if detected.
4. Organise the warehouse in such a way that movement and handling of products are reduced to a minimum.
5. Ensure there is enough space for transporting /handling of pallets and sealed boxes so the risk of damaging material can be reduced to a minimum.
6. Determine who can enter the warehouse and only allow operationally necessary people in the warehouse.
7. Check if it is possible for the warehouse to be contaminated by other activities on the same site. If this is possible please see the relevant CARE guidance documents dealing with controlling exposure at source.
8. When storing pallets with boxes at height, use the proper pallet racking.



Example of pallet racking

RECEIPT OF MATERIALS

During this step avoid non-conforming products being delivered into the warehouse by:

1. Checking type of product and quantity
2. Checking if packaging is correctly sealed and not damaged
3. Checking if product is correctly labelled and label is visible

WAREHOUSE HANDLING AND CONTROLS

Determine how to deal with non-conforming products and communicate the procedures to the relevant parties (e.g. contacting suppliers / hauliers).

Once conforming products have entered the warehouse, damage during transport and handling should be avoided. Use the correct transport means taking into account the maximum load of the transport equipment, the height of the storage location and the layout of the warehouse. The number of movements within the warehouse should be reduced to an absolute minimum.

Perform stock checks on a regular basis to check products, packaging and the label.

LOADING

During the loading step a last control check of the material should be performed. This should include the following measures:

1. Check type of product and quantity
2. Check if packaging is correctly sealed and not damaged
3. Check if products are correctly labelled and label is visible
4. Check if driver fixes the loading properly and truck isn't overloaded

DAMAGED PACKAGING

When handling damaged packaging, the operator shall wear respiratory protective equipment. If damaged or inadequately sealed packaging is noticed, the packaging should be repaired as quickly as possible. If repacking is needed, place the products at the location for non-conforming products and repack as described in the relevant paragraph on repacking.

If the product cannot be re-used, seal packaging to avoid dust exposure and put it as quickly as possible into the proper waste bin. This must be done carefully (i.e. not throwing it in).

Other small debris is best removed using a vacuum cleaner equipped with a HEPA filter.

REPACKING

If repacking is a standard / regular activity, this should be performed in a separate specific area to prevent fibrous dust release into other parts of the warehouse. Where fibrous dust concentrations are likely to be significant the specific area shall be equipped with an exhaust installation as described in CARE guidance level 3 documents "Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) Systems for HTIW".

During any direct handling of HTIW products, the operators must wear respiratory protective equipment. Regular cleaning of the workplace should be carried out to prevent build-up of fibrous dust. Cleaning should be carried out using a vacuum cleaner equipped with HEPA filtration or using a wet cleaning machine.