

Summary of German technical standard for hazardous substances 530

TRGS 530

Hairdresser trade

The technical standard describes protective measures for exposure to hazardous substances in the hairdressing trades. The measures are directed to both employers and employees. The present TRGS also regulates hairdressing-specific wet work. Wet work includes activities in which employees must spend a considerable amount of their work time with moist or wet hands, or a corresponding amount of time wearing waterproof protective gloves, or must clean their hands frequently.

The collective responsibility for the determination and evaluation of risks from hazardous substances in the workplace lies with the employer. He can obtain support and advice through institutions that oversee his company, external services, or qualified specialists within his company.

Substitute materials and their use

The employer must verify whether material, preparations, or products are available with lower health risks than those that were originally intended to be used. Preparations for permanent waves that contain ester of thioglycolic acid should not be used. They can be replaced with products containing nonsensitizing substances or substances with weaker sensitizing potential. „Dusty“ hair-lightening products should not be used. Powdered latex rubber gloves, because of the risk of latex allergy, should be replaced with other suitable gloves.

If the introduction of less hazardous substitute materials is not possible, the employer must verify if the intended (for use) substances or preparations can be obtained and used in a form that poses little possibility of exposure. (e.g., pellets, granules, pastes, double-chamber applicators). Work tools (e.g. scissors) that can expose the skin to Nickel, are unsuitable.

Designation of hazardous substances

The employer is obliged to designate all hazardous substances that can be used in the workplace and/or that could be released. The designation must have at least the following indications: Designation of the hazardous substance, classification of the hazardous substance, and amount of the hazardous substance in the industry in which the hazardous substance will be used.

Protective measures

Technical (engineering) protective measures take precedence over organizational (administrative) measures, and these take precedence over personal protective measures.

Technical protective measures

For hairdressing environments, suitable ventilation is needed. It is especially necessary to equip facilities for mixing and pouring/filling tasks with ventilation. Also, for such tasks, a special

hand washing and care area with adjustable faucet water temperature must be available. For hairdressing work, health regulations require the availability of easily accessible rest areas for any number of employees.

Organizational protective measures

The employer must verify through organizational measures that unavoidable wet work (such as hairwashing), to the extent possible, is spread among several tasks to reduce the time of exposure to any one employee. The length of time wearing waterproof gloves must be limited only to what is absolutely necessary.

Personal protective equipment

As part of personal protective equipment, suitable protective gloves must be made available to employees for the following tasks: hairwashing, head massaging, coloring, adding tones/highlights, hair bleaching or lightening, giving perms, making preparations with hazardous substances, and wet cleaning or disinfection of tools and work spaces.

Observe the following criteria when choosing and using protective gloves: resistance to hazardous substances, resistance to tearing, availability of various sizes, covering of wrists.

Protective hand gloves that are meant for single use should be disposed of after use. In every hair salon a skin protection plan should be visibly displayed (such as in the hand care area). In this plan, protection, cleaning, and care measures for the various tasks must be written out.

Hygiene

For health reasons, eating, drinking or smoking should not be allowed in the work areas. Arm or hand jewelry should not be worn during work, because chemicals and wet work are more critical below jewelry. Be careful that water solutions that contain skin-damaging substances or preparations do not dry up while on the skin. Used customer towels must not be used to dry hands.

Operating Instructions

When substances are handled that are harmful to the skin or to the respiratory system, the employer has to provide operating instructions that indicate the dangers to man and the environment. These instructions must also establish the necessary protective measures and rules of conduct concerning wet work. If there are employees in the workplace who do not understand the German language, the operating instructions must be written in a language that they understand.

The operating instructions must make employees aware of hazards and the means to protect themselves (also during wet work). Employees must be made aware of any new industry procedures, facilities, work tools, hazardous substances, or protective measures. The employer must conduct an evaluation at least once a year to verify the appropriate implementation of protective, cleaning, and care measures.

Occupational medicine care

Employees that work in hairdressing should be advised on occupational medicine and, if necessary, examined. Advice should include information about specific hazards to skin under consideration of skin condition and recommendations of appropriate protective measures. The examination is especially important for the early recognition of skin and respiratory diseases. Information about preventive occupational medicine checkups can be provided by workers compensation funds.