

## Burns risk - Safety and Health ALERT

### Background

Alcohol based hand sanitisers are flammable and therefore they should be used and stored away from high temperatures and flames. There have been instances of people receiving serious burns after hand sanitiser alcohol vapours have caught fire. With the increased usage in workplaces and schools, staff and students need to be aware of this risk and how to minimise it.

### Actions required

- Provide instructions to staff and students in the safe use of alcohol based hand sanitisers
- Review storage and location of any bulk alcohol based hand sanitiser
- Ensure empty containers of alcohol based hand sanitiser are disposed of safely
- Provide training to any staff members who may be handling bulk amounts of alcohol based hand sanitiser, for example dispensing sanitiser from a bulk container to smaller containers

### Safe use

Ensure the hand sanitiser has thoroughly dried on hands before using any equipment that may ignite the alcohol in the sanitiser. Equipment used in schools that may cause ignition include Bunsen burners, portable gas canisters, BBQ's, gas stoves, gas ovens, welding equipment, matches/lighters used to ignite them and soldering irons. Only use sanitiser in a well ventilated area to prevent vapour build up

### Spillage

Ensure staff are aware of how to deal with a large spill of alcohol based hand sanitiser. Depending on where and how much is spilt, this may include turning off or removing all potential ignition sources, evacuating the area, what can be used to clean up the spill and how it will be done.

### Storage

Containers of alcohol based hand sanitisers should be stored in a cool place away from sources of ignition and heat including sparks, open flames and any types of electrical outlets. Only minimal amounts of alcohol based hand sanitiser should be securely stored. Do not store with oxidising agents, for example granular pool chlorine.

### Disposal considerations

Containers must be completely empty and rinsed out with water before disposing of or recycling.



### Further information

- Alcohol-Based Handrub Risks/Hazards, [www.who.int/gpsc/tools/faqs/abhr2/en/](http://www.who.int/gpsc/tools/faqs/abhr2/en/)
- Dangerous Goods and Petroleum Safety Bulletin  
[https://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Documents/Dangerous-Goods/DGS\\_SB\\_0120.pdf](https://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Documents/Dangerous-Goods/DGS_SB_0120.pdf)