

SSOW 14: USE OF WASHDOWN

Issue Number: 07

Date of Issue: 31/01/2026

Based on: RA15

PURPOSE

To ensure washdown activities are carried out safely and in a controlled manner, preventing slips, injection injuries, falls from height, electrocution, and environmental contamination. This SSOW sets out the safe working practices, competency requirements, and equipment standards required for the safe use of washdown facilities in accordance with RA15 and site-specific rules.

PPE REQUIREMENTS

For this activity, the following PPE must be worn



High-vis Vest / Jacket (EN 471)



Safety Boots (S7) (ISO 20345:2022)



Safety Gloves (chemical resistant) (EN 374)



Safety Helmet (EN 397:1995)



Face Shield or Safety Glasses (EN 116:2001)



Only where noise levels exceed 80 dB

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Familiarisation training on high-pressure washing equipment using manufacturer instructions.
- Practical assessment to confirm competence in safe operation.
- Awareness of RA15 and site-specific washdown rules.
- Understanding of electrical safety, PAT testing requirements, and RCD checks.
- Awareness of spill response and correct disposal of hazardous waste.
- Knowledge of safe use of mobile steps and working at height precautions.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- High-pressure washing equipment in good working order.
- PAT-tested electrical tools and functioning RCDs.
- Spill kits, absorbent granules, and waste containers for contaminated materials.
- Clean, debris-free washdown area with functioning oil separator.
- Hoses, cables, and tools positioned to avoid trip or electrocution hazards.
- Mobile steps with guard rails for high-level washing.

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK

- All operatives using high pressure washing equipment are to receive familiarisation training using the manufacturer's literature and be practically assessed to ensure that they are competent.
- All surfaces to be regularly cleaned and kept free of oils and debris. Wash down area to be cleared of debris and contaminants after washdown operations are complete.
- Protective gloves/overalls/goggles/boots to be worn at all times when using high pressure washing equipment.
- All high level washing to be carried out from mobile steps fitted with guard rails. Steps to be moved around as necessary and wheels locked at all times when in use. No over- reaching from steps. Platform of steps to be kept clean and free from oils, fuels, lubricants or debris which could cause slips, trips or falls.
- All equipment to be PAT tested at 3 monthly intervals. Pre use inspection to be carried out by operatives every time equipment is used. If any defects are found do not use and report to supervisor. Labels to be affixed to equipment showing date of last and next PAT test due. If label is out of date do not use equipment. RCD to be tested prior to use. All cables, plugs, & sockets to be inspected for damage prior to use. If any defects are found do not use and report to supervisor. When washing down keep all electrical cables away from water and areas where they could be run over by other vehicles

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- Oil separator to be emptied at regular intervals to prevent overflow

IDENTIFIED RISKS

The SSOW above has been compiled after identifying the following risks from this activity

- Slips, trips and falls due to wet or oily surfaces
- Injection injuries to hands and eyes from high pressure jetting equipment
- Eye/hand injuries from flying debris during high pressure washing
- Falls from height from vehicles during washing down operations
- Electrocutation
- Pollution/contamination of local water courses and/or drains from oils, fuels, lubricants leaking from wash down facility.
- Failure of separator/interceptor installation due to blockages/overflow

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO RISK ASSESSMENT RA15

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