

SAFETY ALERT

Title	Safe use of hand sanitizer in the workplace
Brief Summary	Burns to hands after using alcohol based hand sanitizer (ABHS) in the workplace
Alert No.	001/2020
Date	8 June 2020
Revision	1
Valid Until	Ongoing

The information contained in this alert has been received directly from a CMF & SHIFT member. The origin is from the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers. The company where the incident occurred is not known.

An employee used alcohol-based hand gel sanitiser (ABHS), as per the current recommendations for COVID-19 personal hygiene. After application, but before the liquid sanitiser had fully evaporated and dried, the individual touched a metal surface where a build-up of static created an ignition source and the sanitiser ignited, resulting in an almost invisible flame on both hands. The individual managed to extinguish the flames but was left with first- and second-degree burns (see picture below).



It is recommended that people use a hand sanitizer gels containing a minimum of 60% alcohol to be effective at killing the virus. Once applied, users must ensure the gel has suitable time to dry and avoid touching any surfaces until it has.

Remember that alcohol vapours can ignite if exposed to an ignition source, such as naked flames, extreme heat or static electricity.

If unsure about using alcohol-based sanitisers, washing hands with hot soapy water for a minimum of 20 seconds has the same effect as using hand gel.