

What do I do with that?

Some thoughts on dealing with harmful items from an H&S viewpoint



I think this is dangerous?

- Is it?
 - e.g. Luminous paint on instruments
- Can I make it safe?
 - e.g. Cardiff's rocks
- Could someone else?
- Must I get rid of it?
- How do I get rid of it?

Risk Assessment

- What is a Hazard?
Anything or activity with the potential to cause harm.
- What is Risk?
The Likelihood that the hazard will cause harm combined with the Seriousness of that harm
- What is Risk Assessment?
Calculating the above and **deciding** whether it is acceptable or whether I need to do something about it.

Information

- To make a reasonable decision you need to understand the hazard
- The most likely problems arise from materials
 - Just how nasty is that stuff?
- Can you identify the material?
 - e.g. Many old books have been treated with nasty pesticides in the past, have yours?
 - Possible solutions – handle with gloves, ventilate area.
- Where you can identify look for information on internet – Safety Data Sheets readily available (but beware of Americans)
- Ask an “expert”!

Disposal

- Find someone who wants it/deals with it/is aware of the problem
- So far as hazardous waste is concerned you need to find a company and there will be a cost.
- Think outside the box – e.g. There is a company that supplies chemicals to schools, schools have a similar problem, so that company runs a waste handling service that is, in the main, cheaper when disposing of small quantities.