

6 common mistakes people make when planning a hazardous material storage

How you can reach planning security



When planning to purchase a hazardous materials store, there are several areas that you should consider. For example, Health & Safety legislation governing the chemicals you are storing and the quantity and type of substances to be stored. Another important area is the risk assessment which will stipulate whether fire or Ex protection is required or whether certain storage temperatures must be observed.

A lot can go wrong in the planning process, which may cause companies additional costs and delays as well as safety risks. This special whitepaper covers the 6 most common mistakes in this process.

1. The legal requirements are not considered holistically.

As mentioned in the introduction, there are a number of legal areas. A hazardous materials storage facility is an operational area with increased risk potential and when planning your storage facility it is important to ensure that protective measures are put in place for all legal requirements.

Depending on the materials you are storing, you need to consider protection against water pollution, fire protection, technical ventilation and protection against explosions.

It is vital that you consult with your internal Health & Safety personnel as well as the relevant regulations set out by the Health & Safety Executive.

! Key Facts of the British Health & Safety Legislation 2019

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2. A risk assessment has not been prepared.

The risk assessment should be the central element to a company's occupational safety and the basis for a systematic and successful health & safety management. Before carrying out any activity with hazardous substances, a risk assessment must be carried out to ensure safe handling. Safety data sheets provide a good start in the preparation of a risk assessment, but they are not enough to start planning a hazardous goods storage facility. If the right measures are not put in place, there can be severe consequences.

3. Important requirements from the safety data sheet or the risk assessment were not taken into account in the planning.

If requirements from the safety data sheet or the risk assessment were not considered in the planning stages and therefore the important protective measures not put in place, this can lead to very serious, even life-threatening consequences. For example, if temperature-sensitive substances are not stored in the required temperature range, this can not only cause damage to the product but also increase the risk of fire and explosion.

4. The planned hazardous goods warehouse does not meet the requirements of the property insurer.

Incorrect or incomplete planning can lead to the hazardous goods storage facility not meeting the requirements of the property insurer and in some cases can mean the process must be restarted. Replanning will be required which can be both time consuming and expensive. If hazardous material facilities are erected outdoors, there are also wind, snow and earthquake loads to consider as well as corrosion protection. Your property insurer should be informed from start to completion.

5. Requirements are made that are unnecessary or counter-productive.

Just as important requirements are not taken into account, sometimes requirements are made for unnecessary or inappropriate measures. For example, using black or dark paint for a hazardous material warehouse for high ambient temperatures ranges is counterproductive as it also then needs energy to be spent on maintaining air conditioning.

Another example is where an outdoor installation of a fire protection facility is planned, but due to existing safety distances fire protection is not required.

6. Budget and planning do not match.

The framework for planning a hazardous goods storage facility is determined by the nature and quantity of the stored hazardous substances and the risk assessment. If the projected budget was decided before the framework conditions are determined, then the difference to the actual costs could be considerable.