



Too many welders unaware of carcinogenic chemical

According to a recent survey, 35% of welders remain unaware of the fact that most anti-spatter sprays contain dichloromethane, a carcinogenic, health-damaging chemical. The survey, carried out on behalf of Stevens Industrial Services, suggests that many welders are unknowingly putting their own health at risk by working with the toxic chemical.

Even more concerning is the fact that these results also revealed that, of the 65% of welders who are aware of the harmful effects of dichloromethane, almost half continue to use anti-spatter products that contain the chemical. Most welders who continue to work with dichloromethane based products, take health and safety precautions. 15% use facemasks, 8% rely on extractor fans and 4% merely turn their face away from the spray. However, as many as 8% of those questioned take no measures at all to combat the effects of this category three carcinogen, which has also been proven to cause damage to the blood, the nervous system and the liver.

“I am shocked and disappointed that industry is being so lax about this,” stated Graham Stevens, managing director of Stevens Industrial Services. “The dangers of dichloromethane are evident on the product’s label, so there is no excuse. The best precaution for use of this chemical, in my view, is to simply stop using it altogether.”

42% of welders aware of treatments containing the dichloromethane, have stopped using all anti-spatter products. Instead they are using more time-consuming methods of removing weld spatter, such as scraping, sanding and grinding. 23% now use spatter

control products that do not contain the chemical. “It is understandable that welders continue to use dichloromethane based anti spatters,” explained Stevens, whose company supplies ‘The Works’ range of dichloromethane free spatter control products. “Up until recently these have been the only kind of effective anti-spatter. Many welders are yet to realise that the market now offers anti-spatter sprays that are completely safe to use and even more effective than those based on dichloromethane.”