

INTRODUCTION

Concrete workers are most susceptible to dermatitis when they do hand work. Wet cement is the #1 cause of occupational skin disease in the U.S. Concrete workers lose work at 7 times the national average. Concrete workers report 4 times more lost work days than do all construction workers. Cement has many properties which are damaging to skin. Cement is alkaline, or able to burn. The pH of wet cement ranges from 12 to 13, anything over an 8 will start to burn your skin. Cement is hygroscopic, pulling moisture from the skin. Cement is abrasive. Cement may contain sensitizing chemicals and metals.

FOUR POTENTIAL TYPES OF SKIN PROBLEMS

- Dry skin or irritation
- Irritant contact dermatitis;
- Allergic contact dermatitis
- Caustic burns (alkaline burns) skin problems happen most often among cement products workers.

PROTECTIVE PRACTICES WHEN WORKING WITH WET CEMENT

- Keep concrete from your skin
- Wash with clean water & ph-neutral or mild acidic soap
- Do not wear jewelry at when working with concrete.
- Wear long sleeves
- Use rubber boots with pants taped inside for concrete work.
- Never let cement product remain on skin or clothing
- Avoid barrier creams
- Avoid skin products at work
- Report any persistent skin problem to your supervisor & safety department

APPROPRIATE PPE PROTECTION WHEN WORKING WITH OR AROUND CEMENT

- Don't work for prolonged periods in chemically saturated clothing
- Exercise good daily hygiene
- Report any chemical burns or cement related dermatitis to your Safety & Health Office.