

Servicing & LEV testing for the paint finishing industry

Under the COSHH requirements did you know that you have a legal obligation to examine and test your paint plant at least once every 14 months?

What is COSHH? (The Control Of Substances Hazardous To Health)

COSHH is the law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health. You can prevent or reduce workers' exposure to hazardous substances by:

- Finding out what the health hazards are: (powder, paint and solvents, heat, fumes & dust etc)
- Deciding how to prevent harm to health (risk assessment).
- Providing control measures to reduce harm to health, (Installation of spray booths, extraction systems, oven ventilation systems)
- Making sure they are used correctly and monitored on a regular basis.
- Keeping all control measures in good working order (examination and testing).

Regulation 7 of COSHH requires that the exposure of employees to substances hazardous to health should be prevented or if it is not practicable, be adequately controlled.

Regulation 9 of COSHH requires that all control measures should be properly maintained and regularly examined and tested.

LEV Systems

LEV (Local exhaust ventilation) is the term given to your plant which incorporates any form of extraction that is provided in order to control or minimise any hazards to your employees.

Typically this would include all of the following:

All dry filter and water wash spray booths, powder booths, mix rooms, flash off areas, oven ventilation plant, dust extract systems and wood extraction systems.

All LEV systems should be examined and tested at least once every 14 months, if they are in poor condition or if its performance is likely to reduce over time the 14 month interval may need to be shorter.



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Who should carry out my examination and testing ?

Understanding what is required and choosing a company to carry out your testing can be difficult.

Many suppliers think that carrying out a quick airflow check using a rotating vane anemometer is sufficient for your requirements this is not the case!

The health & safety executive require a strict procedure to be followed, and they also prefer that the engineer carrying out the testing is deemed competent – such as holding the P601 'Commissioning and Thorough Examination and Testing of Local Exhaust Ventilation Systems', which the HSE guidance (HSG258) refers to as one measure of competency in this area.

What tests are required?

The tests can be varied dependent upon the type of plant being checked, however in the paint shop testing would include most of the following:

- First and foremost, a thorough examination should be carried out of the complete plant, checking the Integrity of the plants structure, door seals, ducting joints, filter frames etc.
- Air flow testing across face openings, filters, grid floors etc.
- Pitot tube readings in the extract ducting to determine induct velocities.
- Static pressure checks at suitable locations in ductwork, changing of cross sectional area, across filters and dampers etc.
- Mist clearance checks using a smoke generating machine, across open spray apertures and in enclosed booths.
- Detailed examination of all fans, fan belts, motors and measuring of motor running currents.
- Testing of filter cleaning devices and all safety interlocks
- Dust lamp test across the open face of powder booths and fettling enclosures.

Other tests may be required, it is the responsibility of the competent engineer to determine what is checked and tested. He is also the engineer who has the responsibility to inform you if your plant is safe or if it needs attention.

How can the engineer tell what performance levels are acceptable

The manufacturer of the plant should legally have carried out their own commissioning and performance checks when the plant was initially commissioned, this information should have been given to the client together with operation and maintenance manuals on the day of hand over. These original commissioning figures should be used as the “ bench mark” for assessing your plants performance.

In many instances the original commissioning data is not available. In this case the results obtained in the LEV test should be used as the new “bench mark” (assuming that the levels on containment are acceptable).



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General guidance

Guidance on testing is found in HSG258 Controlling airborne contaminants at work a guide to local exhaust ventilation (LEV).

Remember that high airflow figures do not necessarily mean that the booth provides effective over spray clearance, in many instances this can create turbulence resulting in eddy currents and over spray "swirl".

An experienced competent engineer will understand what tests are required and what the correct readings mean.

Premiere can help!

- Over 30 years of experience servicing and LEV testing of all types of paint finishing plant.
- Competent and experienced engineers trained to P601 'Commissioning and Thorough Examination and Testing of Local Exhaust Ventilation Systems'
- Working to ISO9001 ensuring professional working procedures.
- All test equipment is regularly inspected and calibrated.
- Provision of risk assessments and method statements by qualified engineers.

Our engineers are trained in the following areas:

- Safe use & inspection of ladders.
- Working at heights.
- Safe use and inspection of harnesses.
- Confined space training.
- Abrasive wheels.
- IPAF.
- PASMA scaffolding.
- CITB gas certification.
- Gas safe accreditation .
- Installation of gas pipework (natural gas and propane).
- Testing and purging for both low and high pressures.
- IEE Wiring regs: 17th edition



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