

HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK

PACKAGED UNFIRED BRICKS HANDLING & COSHH INFORMATION

The Health & Safety At Work Act, Consumer Protection Act and other legislation require us to provide relevant information regarding our products in respect of handling, processing, storage, transportation or disposal without risk to health.

HANDLING & STORAGE

Unfired clay brick is an inert material, which presents no risk to health and safety through handling or use, subject to good site practice being followed.

The use of safety clothing such as hard hats, safety boots and industrial gloves is strongly recommended whenever practicable, to minimise the risks associated with falling objects and sharp edges.

If bricks are hit with a trowel, bolster, scutch, etc., eye protection should be worn as clay chips may fly.

Individual bricks are grouped together into packs. Packs are heavy and great care should be taken in their handling. Equipment used for lifting packs must be adequate for the weight involved. The weight of the pack varies according to the size of the product and quantity per pack, but the maximum weight of each standard pack from Ibstock Brick Limited factories is 1.67 tonnes approximately.

These packs will be delivered on disposable wooden pallets, contained by a plastic shrink-wrap.

- **AVOID abnormal shocks to the packs**
- **AVOID sliding one pack against any face of another pack**

Wherever possible, packs should be placed singly on dry, level ground.

Packs may be stacked no more than 2 high, without touching adjacent packs, by a competent forklift driver, provided the stacking ground is hard, level and designed to carry the weight. If there are any indications of instability, such as the stack leaning, then the packs should be immediately re-stacked at ground level.

ON SITE HANDLING

Only use the holes in the packs or pallets provided. To lift packs it is recommended that suitable handling forks should have a width of 90mm and be 1100mm long. **Grabs should not be used on packs of unfired bricks.**

Where packs are lifted more than 1 metre above ground level, a safety cage of adequate dimensions around the pack should be used. All personnel must stand well clear of packs when they are being lifted or moved.

If it is considered necessary to store a brick pack above ground level, it should only be placed on a suitably designed staging with guard rails and brick nets of appropriate height to prevent any bricks falling to lower working areas.

DISPOSAL

Redundant packing materials should be gathered together daily and placed in a waste disposal skips for removal to an approved tip.

The burning of any packaging materials is not normally permitted on sites; some plastic materials may give off harmful fumes. If permission is granted for the burning of wooden pallets great care must be exercised to ensure that environmental pollution controls are not contravened.

COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations)

In general, unfired clay brick products contain 50 - 70% silica. If powered tools are used to cut this product, substantial amounts of dust may be produced. Depending on the environment and the method of cutting, it is possible that some respirable silica may be generated.

The main effect in humans of the inhalation of respirable silica dust is silicosis. There is sufficient information to conclude that the relative lung cancer risk is increased in persons with silicosis...Therefore preventing the onset of silicosis will also reduce the risk of cancer. Since a clear threshold for silicosis development cannot be identified, any reduction of exposure will reduce the risk of silicosis.

Under the COSHH Regulations, the Maximum Exposure Limit (MEL) for respirable silica is currently 0.1mg/m³. The only reliable way to ascertain the levels of individual exposure during cutting is to carry out detailed personal monitoring.

Persons carrying out a dry cutting operation MUST wear suitable respiratory protection. A suitable respirator or disposable mask meeting BS EN 149 (Specification For Filtering Half Masks To Protect Against Particles) is recommended. The use of appropriate respiratory protection by those working near to the dry cutting operation should be considered.

Our advice would be to avoid dry cutting of bricks wherever possible. Wet cutting reduces the amount of dust generated and is a preferable method of cutting.

During the cutting operation, the brick should be firmly held by a mechanical clamp or similar device to prevent movement.

MANUAL HANDLING

An individual standard brick typically weighs 2 to 3 kg (or 4 to 6 kg for the larger unit) and presents low risk of a manual handling injury. We recommend that the HSE Information Sheet Guidelines (Construction Sheet Number 37 - 'Handling Building Blocks') be followed.

Repetitive handling of any product including bricks can give rise to Upper Limb Disorders such as muscular strains and sprains. Specialist help should be sought for anyone involved in this type of work.

IT IS THE CUSTOMERS RESPONSIBILITY TO OBTAIN TECHNICAL DATA ON ALL MATERIALS TO BE USED WITH OUR PRODUCTS.

NO LIABILITY CAN BE ACCEPTED IN RESPECT OF OTHER MATERIALS USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR PRODUCTS.