Burns — what to do

Keep this with the burns kit

Guidance, not training. If a trained first aider is there, they take over. If it is serious, call 999 first and treat while you wait.

CALL 999 NOW IF

- The burn is **bigger than their palm**
- It is on the **face, hands, feet, genitals or across a joint**
- It goes **all the way round** an arm, leg, finger or toe
- The skin is **white, brown, black or leathery**, or they **cannot feel it**
- It is a **chemical burn** — any chemical, any size
- It is an **electrical burn**, including contact with a live main
- They have **breathed in smoke, steam or fumes**, or are hoarse or wheezing
- They are **confused, drowsy, shivering badly or grey and clammy**
- **You are not sure**

If you are not sure, call. Burns get worse for hours after the heat stops.

HEAT BURNS AND SCALDS

1. **Stop the burning.** Clothing alight: stop, drop, wrap, roll.
2. **Cool under running water for 20 minutes.** Start now. Still helps up to three hours later.
3. **Take off rings, watch, belt, boots** before it swells. **Leave anything stuck to the burn.**
4. **Cover it.** Cling film laid lengthways, or a burns dressing. Never wrap cling film round a limb — it tightens as the limb swells.
5. **Keep them warm.** Foil blanket over the rest of them, not over the burn.
6. **Record it** under SOP 8.1. More than seven days off work is RIDDOR reportable.

Running water beats anything in the kit. On an AMWS job there is usually water. Use it. The kit is for when there is not.

NEVER

- Ice or iced water
- Creams, ointments, butter, toothpaste
- Bursting blisters
- Fluffy dressings or cotton wool
- Stopping the cooling early because they say it is fine

CHEMICAL BURNS

Call 999 for any chemical burn, whatever its size.

1. **Gloves on first.** You cannot help anyone if the same chemical gets you.
2. **Brush off dry powder** before adding water.
3. **Flush with running water for at least 20 minutes**, longer for a strong alkali. Let it run off away from clean skin.
4. **Cut contaminated clothing off** while flushing, rather than pulling it over the head.
5. **Send the safety data sheet** to hospital with them, or a photo of the product label.

Alkalis are the deceptive ones. Traffic film remover and chlorinated cleaner hurt less than they should at first and keep penetrating for hours. Flush longer, and call even if they say it is nothing.

Eyes: irrigate with the saline eye wash or clean running water, hold the eyelid open, keep going 20 minutes, then hospital. Do not let them rub it.

WHO TO CALL

Emergency	**999**, ask for ambulance. No clear address on site, give the **what3words** location
First aiders	Leanne Mason and Jason May
Site incidents	Jason May, Site Supervisor
Reporting	SOP 8.1 accident book, then Sean Ashton for RIDDOR assessment

Neither first aider may be on site. If someone is burnt and you cannot find them, call 999 and start cooling. Do not spend time looking.