

Explanation of Key Terms

Time weighted Average (TWA)

The TWA for the exposure to a chemical can be used when both the chemical concentration and time for exposure varies over time. It is thus used as the average exposure to a contaminant to which workers may be exposed without adverse effect over a period such as in an 8-hour day or 40-hour week (an average work shift). They are usually expressed in units of ppm (volume/volume) or mg/m³.

Short-Term Exposure Limit (STEL)

The STEL is a limit value above which exposure to a chemical substance should not occur and usually relates to a 15 minute reference period. The aim of a STEL is to prevent adverse health effects and other unwanted effects due to peak exposure that may not be controlled by the application of an 8 hour TWA limit.

Biological Limit Value (BLV)

A Biological Limit Value is a reference value presented as the concentration in the appropriate biological medium of the relevant agent, its metabolite, or indicator of effect.

Indicative Exposure Limit Value (IOELV)

An IOELV is a health-based, non-binding value, derived from the most recent scientific data available and taking into account the availability of measurement techniques. It sets threshold levels of exposure below which, in general, no detrimental effects are expected for any given substance after short term or daily exposure over a working life time. It is a European objective to assist the employers in determining and assessing risks.

Binding Exposure Limit Value (BOELV)

A BOELV takes account of socio-economic and technical feasibility factors as well as the factors considered when establishing IOELVs. Therefore when setting a BOELV policy considerations are of major importance.