

## Local Exhaust Ventilation Systems (LEVs)

Where employees are exposed to substances that could damage their health employers must abide by the UK's COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) regulations, which state that suitable extraction systems must be installed and regularly tested and maintained.

Activities that either use or produce harmful substances include welding, wood working, handling chemicals in laboratories and the forms of substances that can cause problems range from dusts, such as sawdust, to chemicals, fumes and gases, biological agents or fine mists.

Depending on its type of activity a business may need to install Local Exhaust Ventilation Systems (LEVs), which typically will include an extraction hood, filter system, fans and ducting to take the substance away.

The Health and Safety Executive publishes an informative guide to LEV systems intended for both LEV installers and for employers. It can also be downloaded free of charge as a pdf by following this link:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg258.htm>

There is also a comprehensive HSE website covering information for LEV installers, employers and Lev system examiners:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/lev/index.htm>

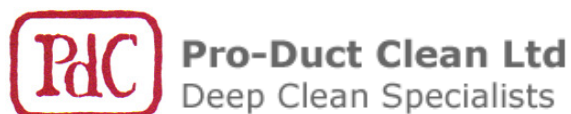
Once installed any LEV equipment installed needs to be both cost effective and working correctly to extract fumes properly. The HSE regulations state that the equipment must be maintained in efficient working order so it continues to provide the necessary protection.

LEV testing must be carried out at least every 14 months, although most companies have their systems tested annually and the records of LEV testing must be kept for at least five years.

The company must also keep information on the installed LEV system to confirm it provides adequate protection, for the lifetime of the equipment. This information is likely to include the intended or designed performance of your system such as hood type and position relative to the process, airflow and other measurements.

It will provide the person carrying out the tests with the basic data they need to ensure that the LEV system is performing to its specification and is adequate for the job it is intended to do.

Information courtesy of



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