

Health Status of Women Workers Exposed to Organic Solvents in Selected Semiconductor and Microelectronics Companies in the Philippines

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Abstract

The research was conducted to assess the health status of women workers exposed to organic solvents in the semiconductor and microelectronics industry. Ten companies from Metro Manila were selected, including 399 females.

Results revealed that workers, who were mostly females, handle organic solvents during routine work operations. Companies employed control measures such as local and general exhaust systems. The most frequent symptoms complained of by respondents referred to narcotic effects implying central nervous system involvement; and irritative symptoms referring to the respiratory tract and the skin. Despite minimal abnormal findings on clinical, laboratory and biologic examinations directly attributable to organic solvent exposure, causal relationship between exposure and symptoms through another study should be pursued. Also, because of the many organic solvents handled by women workers, and the recent occurrence of severe and sometimes fatal diseases such as the Steven Johnson syndrome, continuous monitoring and surveillance of this industry is required to prevent the occurrence of possible occupational and work-related diseases.