

## Work Environment Group

Number 13, March 2018

# HAZARD ALERT

## Flammable materials in drying ovens

### Incident

A notifiable incident occurred at the Research School of Chemistry, Acton Campus, when petroleum spirit 60-80 residues ignited within a Belling & Co Ltd drying oven. The solvent had been used to wash brass shavings in preparation for a student practical experiment and the damp brass shavings had been placed in the drying oven to dry overnight.

Comcare attended the area and issued a Prohibition Notice, which includes a number of **directions** and measures that the University must take to remedy the risk.

### Actions required

- Do not use drying ovens to evaporate or dry mixtures or solutions that contain flammable liquids
- Do not use drying ovens to dry glassware that has been washed or rinsed with a flammable substance until all flammable residues have fully evaporated or been washed off with non-flammable solvents such as water
- Use the ovens for clean, dry labware such as glassware or inert solids only
- Ensure no residues of flammable liquids or solids are left on labware as this may lead to ignition
- Ensure no flammable material is placed inside the drying ovens at any time as the ovens are not intrinsically safe or actively ventilated.

### Communication

- Communicate this notice via staff noticeboards and/or email to staff
- Revise the relevant procedures and communicate these to staff

**Intended Audience:** All laboratory staff and students  
**Contact:** [whs@anu.edu.au](mailto:whs@anu.edu.au) for additional information

**Authorised by:** Work Environment Group

*Workers are reminded to report all hazards and incidents to their supervisor and through [Figtree](#), the University's Workplace safety incident and hazard reporting tool.*