

*“Production had to be interrupted for two weeks because raw material deliveries were delayed due to a strike and there was no alternative raw material supplier.”*

Disruption to the supply of important raw materials is likely to occur if you rely on a sole supplier. Storing raw materials for long periods of time or in poor conditions can cause them to decrease in quality.

The properties of some substances mean that they pose special hazards, for example flammable or toxic chemicals. Also, some substances are incompatible for storage together because they may react with one another and create a greater hazard than when stored separately.

The quality of raw materials can vary between suppliers and could cause problems. Even admixtures, which may seem insignificant, can cause operational problems or production downtime if the standard is poor.

## Tips

- Make sure you have a list of alternative suppliers for all significant raw materials and admixtures.
- Examine the quality systems of your suppliers.
- Get instructions from the supplier on how to store materials.
- If you use hazardous substances, make sure you and your employees are aware of the legal requirements for their safe labelling, transportation, handling, use, storage and disposal.

## Useful links

Health and Safety Executive – Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2002  
[www.hse.gov.uk/chip/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/chip/index.htm)

Health and Safety Executive – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health  
[www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm)

Health and Safety Executive – REACH – new European Union regulation concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals.  
[www.hse.gov.uk/reach/about.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/reach/about.htm)