RM Insight®

EPS sandwich panels - Hazard and controls

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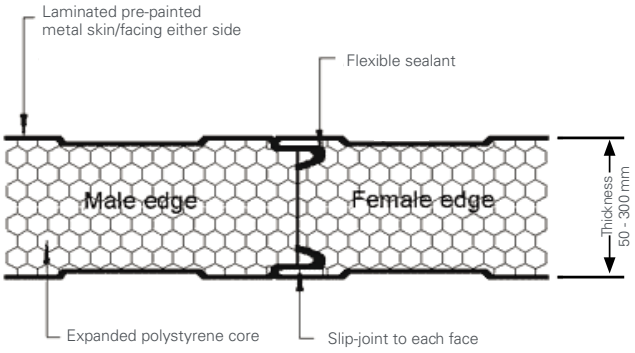
What is EPS?

Expanded or extruded polystyrene (EPS) sandwich panels will generally consist of metal faced sheeting with a polystyrene foam core.

Why is it used?

- light weight and easily installed
- readily cleaned
- good insulation properties
- relatively inexpensive.



Where you will find it?

- cool rooms, chillers & freezers
- clean & controlled environment rooms
- factory partitions, ceilings and roofing
- spray painting & powder coating booths.

Cool room - EPS construction

The hazard

EPS is easy to ignite, particularly if the core is exposed, and burns rapidly.

During a fire the EPS panel core melts to a liquid, liberates flammable vapours, burns and emits large quantities of toxic smoke. The panels delaminate, become structurally unstable, fall apart and collapse.

Fire involving EPS panels

Controlling the risk

- periodically inspect and report damage to EPS panels
- identify and clearly label EPS panel on site
- ensure personnel and contractor awareness of the EPS hazard
- prohibit hot work on or near EPS panel (within 10 m)
- ensure appropriate Cold Work and Hot Work management and permit systems in place.

Fix it

- promptly repair damage to EPS panels
- seal/flash any exposed EPS using cold work methods
- install conduit/collars for electrical cable penetrations
- ensure hot flues and pipework appropriately lagged/ insulated and separated from EPS
- prohibit further installation of EPS panel
- replace with industry approved (non-combustible) alternative whenever opportunity arises.

For more information

www.vero.com.au/risk-management

Contact us at riskengineering@vero.com.au

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