

HSE Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) eBulletin

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Welcome to the latest [Local Exhaust Ventilation \(LEV\)](#) eBulletin, which focuses on the key topic of competence.

It includes details, and further links to guidance on the legal responsibilities associated with protecting your workforce, training employees, and purchasing LEV equipment.

The content is relevant to employers, employees, and suppliers of LEV so please share this information as widely as possible to protect all those working in the industry.

What is competence?

Competence in Health and Safety should be seen as an important component of workplace activities, not an add-on or afterthought.

It is the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has, and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely.

Other factors, such as attitude and physical ability, can also affect someone's competence.

As an employer, you should take account of the competence of relevant employees when you are conducting your risk assessments, as well as suppliers, when purchasing costly equipment. This will help you decide what level of information, instruction, training and supervision you need to provide.

If you use contractors, you have a [legal responsibility](#) to make sure they are competent.

For further guidance please read the following HSE publications:

- [using contractors: A brief guide](#)
- [managing contractors: A guide for employers](#)

LEV Competency Matrix

In February 2019, the cross-industry LEV Competency Matrix was launched, at the joint ILEVE / BOHS conference.

The matrix is aimed at anyone involved in LEV design, installation, commissioning and thorough examination and testing.

It is [available via the ILEVE website](#) and shows ways to demonstrate competency for the different elements within the industry.

It will also assist with identifying knowledge gaps, and planning continued professional development (CPD).

When buying LEV equipment what do I need to consider?

You have a legal responsibility to ensure that employee exposure to dust and fumes etc. is minimised and well controlled.

LEV is an excellent way of doing this. People who supply, examine and maintain LEV need to be competent otherwise your LEV may not work properly, putting people's health and lives at risk.

- Prepare a simple description of the work you want the person to do and give it to them
- Ask them what qualifications, experience and types of LEV system they have designed or supplied before
- Always get more than one quote
- See [LEV useful links page](#)

How to select a competent LEV supplier

When purchasing LEV equipment, you have a legal responsibility to ensure that employee exposure to dust and fumes etc is minimised and well controlled.

- Suppliers and examiners need to be competent otherwise the Local Exhaust Ventilation may be inappropriate, may not work effectively, and may endanger lives
 - Competence is a combination of knowledge, skills and application experience that enables a person to do an effective and reliable job
 - Ask for references, testimonials, and obtain more than one quote
 - Prepare a description of the jobs that you require to be carried out
 - A good supplier should also be able to train your staff. But remember that competence is a combination of knowledge, skills and experience and formal qualifications are not always a guarantee of this
 - Ask your local trade associations for names of competent LEV members
 - See [LEV useful links page](#)
 - Enquire about previous experience, qualifications and types of LEV systems that they have installed
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Key messages for employees

If you work with LEV, make the time to ensure you keep yourself and others healthy.

[Visit this page](#) for a daily checklist and key messages for employees.

For further information on LEV please refer to the [guidance on the HSE website](#), in particular the [Frequently Asked Questions page](#).

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Email was sent to Lukas.zewski@hse.gov.uk

www.hse.gov.uk