

Health & safety

1. Identification of the substance/mixture and of the company undertaking

Metal components for construction

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2. Hazards identification

Metal components are not classified as dangerous according to CHIP which is the law applicable to dangerous chemicals and whose purpose is to protect people and the environment from the effects of dangerous chemicals by requiring suppliers to provide information about the dangers and to package them in a safe manner.

Sharp edges and ends of metal sections represent a risk of cuts and abrasion during handling and use when they are exposed prior to the fixing of plasterboard or other finish. There is a risk from pre-tensioned banding material used to band components when it is cut together with risk due to the movement of the components when it is released.

During flame cutting, welding, grinding or drilling irritant fumes or dust may be produced. Repeated contact with metal coatings and lubricants used during manufacturing processes may cause skin irritation.

3. Composition

Mild steel sections coated by hot dipped galvanising or zinc electrolytic process. Components may have residual roll forming lubricant.

4. First aid measures

Skin contact – Wash thoroughly with soap and water

Eye contact – Wash eyes with clean water until irritation ceases. If irritation persists seek medical advice.

Inhalation/ingestion Not applicable

5. Fire fighting measures

Metal sections are classified as non-flammable. However packaging materials may be combustible and should be extinguished by dry powder, foam, or water fire extinguisher.

6. Accidental release measures

Product discarded in an unaltered state is classified non-hazardous.

7. Handling and storage

Manual handling – Sections are supplied in various lengths, profiles and thicknesses which results in a wide variation in weight and size of individual and multiple sections. Care should be taken to assess the risks involved when manually handling sections both to the person doing the handling and to those in the vicinity. Long lengths should be handled with particular care and consideration. Appropriate cut resistant PPE should be used when handling or working with metal sections (see section 8). Banding straps are not suitable for lifting bundled section. Particular care should be taken when cutting banding straps both from the risk presented by the possibility of banding 'whipping' and instability of bundles when the banding tension is released. Banding should only be removed at ground level.

Mechanical handling – Dimensions of bundles and pallets will vary depending upon the product size and weight. There is risk from overloading mechanical lifting devices and reference should be made to the packaging information regarding the weight of individual bundles or pallets. Long lengths of section should be handled with particular care to avoid damage and single leg lifting straps should not be used. Spreader beams may be necessary for long lengths of section. Chains are unsuitable for lifting light gauge steel sections and lifting straps should be wide enough to prevent product damage. Banding should not be used to lift bundles.

Storage – Material should be stored under cover to prevent prolonged exposure to moisture and rain which can cause the appearance of 'white rust' especially between tightly packaged sections. White rust is not normally detrimental to the performance of the product but is aesthetically displeasing and if

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left for long enough can result in the breakdown of galvanised or plated finishes. Pallets and bundles should be stored in a safe manner and stacks should be both level and vertical. Stack heights should not exceed twice the minimum width of the pack. Bundles should be stored off the ground on sufficient number and size of dry timbers to prevent damage.

Use – Caution: all cut metal products present a risk of injury from sharp edges or corners. Appropriate cut-resistant PPE should be used when handling and working with metal sections. Eye protection should be worn when using hand tools (see section 8). Installed sections may have exposed sharp edges and corners and care should be taken to protect people from accidental injury.

Installers should work from a safe platform or support system. Metal sections are not suitable to support body weight. Care should be taken to avoid trailing cables of power tools contacting sharp edges of metal sections as damage to the cable could occur.

8. Exposure controls/personal protection

Workplace Exposure Limits (WELs)

Substance

Iron Oxide, fume (as Fe)

Long-term exposure limit (8hr TWA reference period)

5mg/m³

Short-term exposure limit (15min. reference period)

10 mg/m³

9. Physical and chemical properties

Appearance - Metal sections in various lengths, profile shapes and thicknesses

Odour – Oily protective/manufacturing lubricant

10. Stability and reactivity

Stable under normal conditions but fumes are produced when subjected to high temperatures.

11. Toxicological information

Inhalation – Dry grinding, abrasive cutting or machining will produce dust of the same composition as the base material and coating. Flame cutting and welding may produce fumes of oxide and zinc and will breakdown any protective coating present on the products. Potential effects on health include metal fume fever which results in 'flu like' symptoms and may have a long term effect on the worker's lungs.

Skin contact – Prolonged and repeated contact may cause skin irritation and may lead to dermatitis.

Eye contact – None in normal use

Ingestion – Not applicable

12. Ecological information

Stable product with no recognised adverse environmental impact

13. Disposal considerations

Disposal should be at an authorised metal recycling facility in accordance with current Waste legislation and regulations.

14. Transport information

Not classified as hazardous for transportation

15. Regulatory information

Products are not classed as hazardous under CHIP regulations

16. Other information

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations

Note: This Safety Data Sheet does not constitute a workplace risk assessment for COSHH. A COSHH assessment is not required for metal framing components. Metal framing components should not be welded as this may affect the structural integrity of the products.