

Lines to take on the Poisons Act 1972 (for businesses to use in event of customer enquiry)

The law on sales of certain chemicals has changed.

Products containing high concentrations of hydrogen peroxide, nitromethane, nitric acid, sodium or potassium perchlorate, sodium or potassium chlorate and sulfuric acid are now restricted from sale to the general public under the Poisons Act 1972.

If you want to buy any of the restricted chemicals, you need to apply to the Home Office for a licence to acquire at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hazardous-sites-and-substances>.

The law came into force on 2 September 2014.

The law reduces the risks associated with allowing sales of chemicals that can be used to cause harm while still allowing those with a legitimate need for the chemicals to continue their activities.

It is a criminal offence for a member of the general public to acquire a restricted chemical above the concentration threshold without a valid licence. Any person found guilty of this offence is liable:

On summary conviction in a Magistrates' Court to up to three months and/or a fine up to level five on the standard scale

OR

On conviction on indictment in the Crown Court to up to two years imprisonment and/or a fine.

Tips on how to refuse a sale:

You MUST REFUSE TO sell any restricted chemical to any member of the general public (non professional user) who is unable to produce a valid explosives precursors licence

Explain briefly why you cannot sell. Try saying:

‘I’m sorry, if I serve you I might be breaking the law.’

Direct the customer to the gov.uk web-site for an application form for an explosives precursors licence.

Be positive in your refusal. Have a firm tone of voice, be confident and use direct eye contact. The law is on your side and you are doing the right thing.

Remind them that their actions may be caught on CCTV.

If the situation gets worse:

- Don’t allow yourself to be drawn into any arguments
- Don’t use confrontational body language and keep a safe distance, preferably using a counter or till point as a barrier
- Call your manager or supervisor for support if necessary
- Tell the customer that you are just complying with the law and they are not being singled out. The rules are the same for everyone
- Tell them that their behaviour is unacceptable and ask them to leave the premises in a clear and calm voice
- If all else fails, advise them that you will have no option but to call the police
- If this does not work call the police

If possible, take some time to cool off and seek the advice of your manager or supervisor or another colleague.