

This Information Sheet provides guidance on using microwaves safely in a laboratory environment.

Microwave Hazards

Using microwaves in a lab is very similar to using microwaves at home.

You have to be just as careful of the general hazards associated with heating or using a microwave. For example, the heat from steam

Using Microwaves Safely

The steps below should ensure your health and safety when microwaving items in a lab:

ALWAYS refer to the COSHH and Risk Assessments before heating any substance.

NEVER microwave flammable or toxic materials.

BE CAREFUL when microwaving water – the water may not appear to be boiling but can explode when removed from the microwave.

Use suitable (non-metallic), heat resistant containers.

Never overfill containers.

Use a suitable stopper¹ that stops bubbling over but also stops pressure build-up.

Allow items to cool for **at least 30 seconds**² before removing them.

Wear heat resistant gauntlets³ when removing items. Keep your lab coat sleeves tucked