



SOCOTEC's Coal Tar Analysis

SOCOTEC provides a comprehensive coal tar testing suite designed to correctly identify the presence of coal tar and distinguish between product types and their varying degrees of hazard.

Coal tar hazards

Coal tar and many coal tar distillates contain complex combinations of hydrocarbons (polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), alkyl PAHs, cresols, phenols, carbazoles) as well as heterocyclic oxygen, sulphur and nitrogen compounds.

The potential hazards posed by coal tar are due to the high levels of PAHs present, some of them (such as benzo (a) pyrene) are known carcinogens.

Past and present uses of coal tar and coal tar distillates include:

- Road construction and maintenance (in the UK prior to 1980)
- Roofing materials
- Feedstock for the chemical industry (production of dyes or creosote)
- Fuel for blast furnaces in the steel industry
- Binding agent in the production of carbon electrodes
- Medical applications

Coal tar and bitumen are chemically different

Coal tar and bitumen are chemically different products with different degrees of hazard. The concentrations of PAHs can be very high in coal tar, but extremely low in bitumen. SOCOTEC's testing suite discriminates between the different product types (coal tar pitch, coal tar creosote, bitumen and heavy fuels).

SOCOTEC's coal tar testing suite includes:

- Dichloromethane (DCM) extractable matter
- SVOCs quantification including:
 - EPA PAH16 plus coronene
 - Phenols
- Forensics SVOC analysis
 - Identification of alkylated PAHs:
 - Phenols
 - Biomarkers
- Senior chemist interpretive report

MORE ABOUT OUR SERVICES

If you would like to find out more about our coal tar testing solutions or to discuss your testing requirements please call Environmental Chemistry on 0845 603 2112 or email salesuk@socotec.com