Hazard Communication

In order to ensure chemical safety in the workplace, information about the identities and hazards of the chemicals present in the workplace must be available and understandable to workers. OSHA’s Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires the development and dissemination of such information. Supervisors have the primary responsibility for ensuring that employees are informed on the chemicals present in a given work area and their associated hazards. This fact sheet contains information about OSHA’s Hazard Communication Regulations.

Safety Data Sheets

The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires chemical manufacturers, distributors, or importers to provide Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) (formerly known as Material Safety Data Sheets or MSDSs) to communicate the hazards of hazardous chemical products. As of June 1, 2015, the HCS requires new SDSs to be in a uniform format, and include the section numbers, the headings, and associated information under the headings below:

Section 1, Identification includes product identifier; manufacturer or distributor name, address, phone number; emergency phone number; recommended use; restrictions on use.

Section 2, Hazard(s) identification includes all hazards regarding the chemical; required label elements.

Section 3, Composition/information on ingredients includes information on chemical ingredients; trade secret claims.

Section 4, First-aid measures includes important symptoms/ effects, acute, delayed; required treatment.

Section 5, Fire-fighting measures lists suitable extinguishing techniques, equipment; chemical hazards from fire.

Section 6, Accidental release measures lists emergency procedures; protective equipment; proper methods of containment and cleanup.

Section 7, Handling and storage lists precautions for safe handling and storage, including incompatibilities.

Section 8, Exposure controls/personal protection lists OSHA's Permissible Exposure Limits (PELs); Threshold Limit Values (TLVs); appropriate engineering controls; personal protective equipment (PPE).

Section 9, Physical and chemical properties lists the chemical's characteristics.

Section 10, Stability and reactivity lists chemical stability and possibility of hazardous reactions.

Section 11, Toxicological information includes routes of exposure; related symptoms, acute and chronic effects; numerical measures of toxicity.

Section 12, Ecological information* Section 13, Disposal considerations* Section 14, Transport information* Section 15, Regulatory information*

Section 16, Other information, includes the date of preparation or last revision.

*Note: Since other Agencies regulate this information, OSHA will not be enforcing Sections 12 through 15(29 CFR 1910.1200(g)(2)).

Employers must ensure that SDSs are readily accessible to employees.

See Appendix D of 1910.1200 for a detailed description of SDS contents.
Warning Pictograms

As of June 1, 2015, the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires pictograms on labels to alert users of the chemical hazards to which they may be exposed. Each pictogram consists of a symbol on a white background framed within a red border and represents a distinct hazard or collection of hazards. The pictogram on the label is determined by the chemical hazard classification. There are nine pictograms as shown here.

- Flammables
- Self Reactives
- Pyrophorics

- Oxidizers

- Irritant
- Dermal Sensitizer
- Acute Toxicity (harmful)
- Narcotic Effects
- Respiratory Tract Irritation

- Explosives
- Self Reactives
- Organic Peroxides

- Corrosives

- Acute Toxicity (severe)

- Gases under pressure

- Carcinogen
- Respiratory Sensitizer
- Mutagenicity
- Aspiration Toxicity

- Aquatic Toxicity

Container Labeling

OSHA has updated the requirements for labeling of hazardous chemicals under its Hazard Communication Standard (HCS). As of June 1, 2015, all labels will be required to have pictograms, a signal word, hazard and precautionary statements, the product identifier, and supplier identification. A sample revised HCS label, identifying the required label elements, is shown here. Supplemental information can also be provided on the label as needed.

For more information contact:

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THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

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Or visit: ehs.utah.edu
Email: questions@ehs.utah.edu

Or scan the QR code below to visit the OSHA Hazard Communication Webpage.