

HAZARD COMMUNICATION AND THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZING SYSTEM

The OSHA Hazard Communication Standard is now aligned with the Globally Harmonizing System (GHS). GHS is a key change in the OSHA Hazard Communication requirements in that it affects both the Suppliers & Manufacturers of hazardous chemicals and the Employers whose employees may be exposed to those chemicals.

GHS is an international approach that standardizes chemical hazard classification, labeling and safety data sheets. For more information visit OSHA's GHS website at www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/ghs.html

WRITTEN HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

An effective hazard communication program ensures that workers who may be exposed to hazardous chemicals know about the chemical's hazards and understand how to protect themselves from those hazards. Product labels and safety data sheets (SDS), formerly known as material safety data sheets (MSDS), are the main tools for developing a hazard communication program. They identify the hazardous properties of chemicals that may pose a health or physical hazard and provide guidance on how to handle them safely.

The first requirement of the Hazard Communication standard (Worker Right to Know Law) is that employers should establish a written, comprehensive Hazard Communication program which includes provisions for container labeling, Safety Data Sheets and employee training. The program should also state the means that employers will use to inform employees of hazards associated with non-routine tasks and the way the employer will inform contractors in manufacturing facilities of the hazards to which they are exposed.

LABELS AND OTHER FORMS OF WARNING

Chemical manufacturers and importers, as well as their distributors, should be sure that containers of hazardous chemicals leaving their plants are labeled or marked with the identity, appropriate hazard warnings, target organs, first aide, and the name and address of the manufacturer or other responsible party. In the workplace, materials which are removed from their original shipping containers should be labeled with the same information that appears on the shipping label. The hazard warnings can be any type of message, words, pictograms or symbols which convey the Hazards of the chemicals in the container. Labels should be legible, in English (and other languages if necessary or desired) and prominently displayed. Many pre-made labels are available which can be filled in by the employer for individual materials. The message should be worded such that the worker can understand its meaning.

Some exceptions to the labeling rule include:

- Stationary signs or placards which convey the hazard information for a number of stationary containers may be posted in a work area rather than labeling each

: [Graphic Design Centre](#)

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