



Safety Tip of the Week

Your Safety Is Our Business®

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New Hazard Communication Requirements

In May of 2012, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced it was revising the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS). The revision aligns HCS with the United Nations' global chemical labeling system or Global Harmonization System (GHS). The alignment will prevent an estimated 43 deaths an estimated 585 injuries and illnesses annually, according to OSHA.

In addition to the safety and health benefits with this revision, there is also a financial benefit for businesses. This revision will result in an estimated \$475.2 million in enhanced productivity for U.S. businesses each year. Furthermore, it reduces trade barriers for those businesses that regularly trade, store, and use hazardous chemicals.



Pictograms:

These convey health, physical, and environmental hazard information, assigned to a GHS hazard class and category. The GHS designates eight pictograms to identify a hazard category. Manufacturers and producers are already producing updated labels. Businesses will need to contact the manufacturers and producers for updated labeling.

Along with labeling, a safety data sheet (SDS) must accompany all the material identified in the inventory. Under the revised standard, SDSs replace material safety data sheets (MSDSs). SDSs provide a standardized order of information whereas MSDSs provide a detailed reference source on a hazardous material, but do not specify a format or order of information.

Precautionary statements:

Standardized precautionary statements describe recommended measures to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure, improper handling, or incorrect storage methods of a hazardous chemical.

Example: Wear face protection. First aid is included in precautionary information.

Employers will need to update written HazCom programs to reflect the changes in the work environment brought about by the new regulations.

Ignoring a warning can cause much mourning!!

