



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Hazard Communication

The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is now aligned with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS).

This update to the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) provides a common and coherent approach to classifying chemicals and communicating hazard information on labels and safety data sheets.

This update helps reduce trade barriers and results in productivity improvements for American businesses that regularly handle, store, and use hazardous chemicals, while providing cost savings for American businesses that periodically update safety data sheets and labels for chemicals covered under the hazard communication standard.

Hazard Communication Standard:

In order to ensure chemical safety in the workplace, information about the identities and hazards of the chemicals must be available and understandable to workers. OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires the development and dissemination of such information:

- Chemical manufacturers and importers are required to evaluate the hazards of the chemicals they produce or import and prepare labels and safety data sheets to convey the hazard information to their downstream customers.
- All employers with hazardous chemicals in their workplaces must have labels and safety data sheets for their exposed workers and train them to handle the chemicals appropriately.

Major changes to the Hazard Communication Standard:

- **Hazard classification:** Provides specific criteria for classification of health and physical hazards, as well as classification of mixtures.
- **Labels:** Chemical manufacturers and importers are required to provide a label that includes a harmonized signal word, pictogram, and hazard statement for each hazard class and category. Precautionary statements must also be provided.
- **Safety Data Sheets:** Now have a specified 16-section format.
- **Information and training:** Employers are required to train workers on the new labels elements and safety data sheets format to facilitate recognition and understanding.

Signal words:

Based on the GHS criteria, only two signal words, 'Danger' and 'Warning,' remain. GHS drops 'Caution.' The signal word indicates the relative degree of severity of a hazard.

- 'Danger,' for the more severe hazards.
- 'Warning,' for the less severe hazards.

Hazard statements:

These are standard phrases assigned to a hazard class and category that describe the nature of the hazard. There is a single harmonized hazard statement for each level of hazard within each hazard class.

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.

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.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS):

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.

The new SDSs contain 16 headings:

1. Identification;
2. Hazard identification;
3. Composition/information on ingredients;
4. First aid measures;
5. Firefighting measures;
6. Accidental release measures;
7. Handling and storage;
8. Exposure controls/personal protection;
9. Physical and chemical properties;

10. Stability and reactivity;
11. Toxicological information;
12. Ecological information;
13. Disposal considerations;
14. Transport information;
15. Regulatory information; and
16. Other information.

Of the 16 headings, OSHA will regulate 12; they will not regulate:

12. Ecological information;
13. Disposal considerations;
14. Transport information.

Remember:

Hazard Communication Standard programs should have been updated, written to reflect the changes in the work environment brought about by the new regulations. Written programs should include how the facility implemented the standard, contain a list of all chemicals, address non-routine tasks, and discuss contractors' responsibilities.

YOUR RIGHT TO UNDERSTAND...IT'S ALL ABOUT SAFETY!!!

