

## Hazard Communication Standard: The Employee's Right to Know

### The Standard

Otherwise known as the "Employee's Right to Know," violations of the Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200 for General Industry and 29 CFR 1926.59 for Construction) are among the top cited OSHA violations every year. In 2012, OSHA updated the Hazard Communication program to comply with requirements for Global Harmonization.

The standards arose out of a fundamental belief that employees have a right to know the hazards posed by substances in the workplace, and a responsibility to take necessary precautions to avoid injuries relating to those substances.

The purpose of this document is to provide tips to make your hazard communication program a successful one. It is not a complete reference document, but provides basic information vital to your program.

Major components of the hazard communication standard include an assessment of chemical hazards in your workplace, safety data sheets (SDS), container labeling, development of a written program, and employee information and training.

### Assessment of Chemical Hazards

Assessment is the first step in developing a hazard communications program. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Listing all chemicals or substances that have potential physical or health hazards
- Organizing chemicals in a logical manner
- Determining the average amount kept on site
- Requesting any missing SDS sheets and documenting the request
- Establishing where the list is to be kept; notifying employees and emergency facilities

### Written Program

Must be developed by the employer and must include:

- Policy statement
- List of all hazardous materials
- Explanation of compliance methods for labeling, SDS and training
- Method for communicating the procedure for routine and non-routine tasks
- Compliance procedures for contractors and/or outside vendors

### Safety Data Sheets

Must be:

- Kept for each hazardous chemical that is used
- In English (minimum requirement)
- Provided for any product used, altered or repackaged
- Provided to employees upon request
- Organized in a logical manner and accessible at all times
- In compliance with certain special requirements for traveling employees and multiple job sites

### Container Labeling

Must include:

- Product Identifier
- Signal Word
- Pictogram
- Hazard Statement
- Precautionary Statement
- Name, address and phone number of distributor or importer

### Employee Information & Training

Must be done:

- Prior to the initial assignment to work with a hazardous substance
- Whenever hazards or substances change (new materials)
- Whenever an employee transfers into an area with new or different hazards

### Training Records

Must be:

- Complete
- Documented



# Label Elements

Global Harmonization requires that labels follow strict guidelines and include the following elements:

## Product Identifier

This is how the chemical is identified, which could be chemical name, code or batch number. This is determined by the manufacturer, importer or distributor.

## Signal Word

The signal word will either be "Danger" or "Warning" to reflect the hazard class of the chemical. Danger will reflect more severe hazards; warning will reflect the less severe hazards.

## Hazard Statements

These statements describe the nature of the hazard.

## Precautionary Statements

This is a phrase that will describe recommended measures to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from chemical exposure.

## Pictograms

There are eight pictograms that identify chemical hazards. They are pictured below.

<p><b>Health Hazard</b></p> 	<p><b>Flame</b></p> 	<p><b>Exclamation Mark</b></p> 
<p>Carcinogen Mutagenicity Reproductive Toxicity Respiratory Sensitizer Target Organ Toxicity Aspiration Toxicity</p>	<p>Flammables Pyrophorics Self-Heating Emits Flammable Gas Self-Reactives Organic Peroxides</p>	<p>Irritant (skin and eye) Skin Sensitizer Acute Toxicity (harmful) Narcotic Effects Respiratory Tract Irritant Hazardous to Ozone Layer (Non-Mandatory)</p>
<p><b>Gas Cylinder</b></p> 	<p><b>Corrosion</b></p> 	<p><b>Exploding Bomb</b></p> 
<p>Gases Under Pressure</p>	<p>Skin Corrosion/Burns Eye Damage Corrosive to Metals</p>	<p>Explosives Self-Reactives Organic Peroxides</p>
<p><b>Flame over Circle</b></p> 	<p><b>Environment (Non-Mandatory)</b></p> 	<p><b>Skull and Crossbones</b></p> 
<p>Oxidizers</p>	<p>Aquatic Toxicity</p>	<p>Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)</p>

# Hazard Communication Safety Data Sheets

## **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.

\* Denotes optional information

***Your entire program must comply with GHS by June 1, 2016.***

**HS85**

Batch number: 85L6543



**Warning**  
Harmful if swallowed

Wash hands and face thoroughly after handling. Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product. Dispose of contents/container in accordance with local, state and federal regulations.

### **First aid:**

If swallowed: Call a doctor if you feel unwell. Rinse mouth.

GHS Example Company, 123 Global Circle, Anyville, NY 130XX

Telephone (888) 888-8888





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**SafetyConnection: Hazard Communication Standard: The Employee's Right to Know**

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