

Hazard Communication Program – The Right To Know Law



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued a regulation to help control chemical exposure on the job. The regulation is called the Hazard Communication Standard, but is commonly called Hazard Communication or the “Right To Know Law”. It can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 29 CFR 1910.1200. The standard says you have a right to know what chemicals you are working with or around. Its intention is to make your workplace a safer place. It requires that all chemicals in your workplace be fully evaluated for possible physical or health hazards. It mandates that all information relating to these hazards be made available to you.

1. All persons ordering hazardous materials shall request that the supplier send an SDS with the materials.
2. The Safety Coordinator shall ensure that SDS’s for the products which are purchased within the company are supplied.
3. A master copy of all SDS’s shall be kept in the main office.
4. New and revised SDS’s shall be reviewed by the Safety Coordinator to determine the appropriate handling and training requirements.
5. No chemicals will be put into use before receiving an acceptable SDS for that chemical.
6. Cans, drums, and all other portable containers shall have labels, tags, or stenciled markings.
7. Hazardous chemicals stored in bulk or contained in process streams may be indicated on the containers or piping.
8. SDS’s for all identified hazardous chemicals are to be readily available for use or inspection.
9. Shipments received of hazardous materials shall assure that proper warning labels are in place on the containers
10. Labels shall include the following:
 - a. Name, Address and Telephone Number
 - b. Product Identifier
 - c. Signal Word
 - d. Hazard Statement(s)
 - e. Precautionary Statement(s)
 - f. Pictogram(s)
11. Employees shall be provided information and training on hazardous chemicals used in their work area:
 - a. at the time of their initial assignment
 - b. whenever a new hazard is introduced in their work area
 - c. annually
12. Employees shall be advised and informed of the Hazard Communications Program and its requirements by any of the following methods:
 - a. video tapes, slides, or movies
 - b. scheduled training sessions
 - c. announcements at safety training meetings
 - d. bulletins posted on employee notice boards
 - e. posters placed in conspicuous places

- f. handouts at training session
13. At any session where employees are advised, informed, or training is conducted concerning hazardous chemicals, the information shall be documented and each employee shall sign the safety meeting report indicating that the information was presented and understood.
14. All training shall include the following:
- a. The location and hazards of any chemicals stored or used in the local operations.
 - b. The location and availability of this written program and the list of hazardous chemicals and SDS's which are used at that work area.
 - c. Details of the Hazard Communication Program, including how to read and interpret SDS's and labels.
 - d. How to detect the presence or release of the hazardous chemicals
 - e. The physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area and how the employee can protect himself from these hazards.
 - f. Appropriate emergency procedures including first aid and spill/leak procedures.
 - g. The hazardous chemical lists shall be located at the main office and will be available for employee inspection and reference during working hours.
 - h. This list shall be updated on a regular basis as new products are received. Products which are no longer used or have been discarded may be deleted on a less frequent schedule, but shall be updated at least annually.
15. Each training session should include the following information:
- a. a review of all applicable SDS's
 - b. a review of the hazardous chemical list
 - c. the location of the hazardous chemical information for additional review
 - d. possible physical and health hazards involved with the task

Such training shall be documented and signed by the individuals who will be performing the work.

Additional Resources

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) will provide a common and coherent approach to classifying chemicals and communicating hazard information on labels and safety data sheets. This update will also help reduce trade barriers and result 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.

[OSHA – Hazard Communication](#)