

The purpose of a Hazard Communication Standard, 1910.1200 is to help employees understand the potential hazards of the chemicals in use at their worksite. This education, required by the Occupational Safety & Health Act, is also called Workers' Right to Know & Understand. Failure to meet all the requirements of the law is OSHA's most frequently cited violation.

Hazard Communication is very important, however, because it can protect employees from dangers that may be present when chemicals are being used. Two very important keys to a Hazard Communication Program are container labeling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS). These sheets tell you "everything you need to know" about a specific chemical. If you read the SDS you will be able to determine:

- The HEALTH HAZARDS associated with any chemical you are using or are exposed to;
- How FLAMMABLE the product is, and at what temperature it may ignite;
- The REACTIVITY of the chemical with water or other agents--will it explode, etc.?
- What PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) is needed to work with the product.

Every employee should be able to answer, and should remember, the following questions:

- Where are the SDS's kept for the chemicals that I am exposed to?
- What kinds of hazards do I face when I use-or misuse--this chemical?
- Do I understand the emergency procedures to follow in the event of a spill?
- Have I inspected my personal protective equipment to be sure that it will protect me properly when and if I need to use it?

Copies of the SDS's and the Hazard Communication Program must be kept in a binder or electronic location where all employees can access them. SDS's must be readily available to all employees during each work shift, so if electronic access is provided it must be available to everyone and accessible even during a power outage. If an SDS is not available, immediately contact your supervisor.

Container labels are the first and easiest place to look to see if the material you are using is hazardous. Labels can tell you quickly what you need to do to protect yourself. There are many different types of labels, but the most common type is the manufacturer's written labels. Written labels state the name of the material, who makes or sells it, and the appropriate physical/health hazard warnings.

In the work place, every container must be labeled, tagged, or marked with the identity of hazardous chemicals contained, and must show hazard warnings appropriate for employee's protection. The employees in each area should ensure that all secondary containers are labeled with either an extra copy of the original manufacturer's label or with labels that have the identity and the appropriate hazard warning.

Signature of Employees in Attendance:

DATE:

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