



TEAMSTERS Safety & Health FACTS

Safety and Health Department, International Brotherhood of Teamsters
25 Louisiana Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001 ♦ 202/624-6960 ♦ ibtsafety@teamster.org

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard and the Globally Harmonized System (GHS)

Purpose 1910.1200(a)

The purpose of the Hazard Communication standard (HazCom) is to address comprehensively the issue of classifying the potential hazards of chemicals, and communicating information concerning hazards and appropriate protective measures to employees. Communicating hazards to employees may include: developing and maintaining a written hazard communication program for the workplace, including lists of hazardous chemicals present; labeling of containers of chemicals in the workplace and containers of chemicals being shipped to other workplaces; preparation and distribution of safety data sheets (SDS's) to employees and downstream employers; and the development and implementation of employee training programs, in easily understandable formats, regarding hazards of chemicals and protective measures.

Scope 1910.1200(b)

This standard applies to any chemical which is known to be present in the workplace in such a manner that employees may be exposed under normal conditions of use or in a foreseeable emergency. Affected parties include chemical manufacturers, producers, shippers, and end users.

Written Hazard Communication Program 1910.1200(e)

Employers shall develop, implement, and maintain at each workplace, a written hazard communication program which describes:

- ◆ How labels and other forms of warning methods, safety data sheets, and employee information and training will be met, and which also includes the following:
- ◆ A list of the hazardous chemicals known to be present and,

- ◆ The methods the employer will use to inform employees of the hazards of non-routine tasks, and the hazards associated with chemicals contained in unlabeled pipes in their work areas.

The employer shall make the written hazard communication program available, upon request, to employees and their designated representatives in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1020 (e).

Exception: Sealed Containers (retail trades, warehousing and truck and marine cargo handling). A written hazard communication program is not required for these operations however, Employers must:

- ◆ Ensure labels affixed to incoming containers of hazardous chemicals are kept in place,
- ◆ Maintain and provide access to SDS's received, or obtain SDS's if requested by an employee,
- ◆ Train workers on what to do in the event of a spill or leak.

Labels 1910.1200(f)

Each container of hazardous chemicals leaving the workplace must be labeled, tagged, or marked with the following information:

1. Product identifier; means the name or number used for a hazardous chemical on a label or in the SDS. It provides a unique means by which the user can identify the chemical.
2. Signal word; means a word used to indicate the relative level of severity of hazard and alert the reader to a potential hazard on the label. The signal words used in this standard are "danger" and "warning." "Danger" is used for the more severe hazards, while "warning" is used for the less severe.
3. Hazard statement(s); means a statement assigned to a hazard class and category that describes the nature of the hazard(s) of a chemical, including, where appropriate, the degree of hazard
4. Pictogram(s); means a composition that may include a symbol plus other graphic elements, such as a border, background pattern, or color, that is intended to convey specific information about the hazards of a chemical.
5. Precautionary statement(s); means a phrase that describes recommended measures that should be taken to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to either contact with a hazardous chemical or from improper storage or handling.
6. Name, address, and telephone number; means the contact information of the chemical manufacturer, importer, or other responsible party must appear clearly on the container.

The employer shall ensure that workplace labels or other forms of warning are legible, in English, and prominently displayed on the container, or readily available in the work area throughout each work shift. Employers having employees who speak other languages may add the information in their language to the material presented, as long as the information is presented in English as well.

Labels shall be revised within six months of becoming aware of any new information regarding the chemical.

NOTE: The employer is not required to label portable containers into which hazardous chemicals are transferred from labeled containers, and which are intended only for the immediate use of the employee who performs the transfer.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) 1910.1200(g)

Employers shall have a safety data sheet in the workplace for each hazardous chemical which they use. The SDS must include the 16 sections detailed below, in order:

- ◆ Section 1. Identification;
- ◆ Section 2. Hazard(s) identification;
- ◆ Section 3. Composition/information on ingredients;
- ◆ Section 4. First-aid measures;
- ◆ Section 5. Fire-fighting measures;
- ◆ Section 6. Accidental release measures;
- ◆ Section 7. Handling and storage;
- ◆ Section 8. Exposure controls/personal protection;
- ◆ Section 9. Physical and chemical properties;
- ◆ Section 10. Stability and reactivity;
- ◆ Section 11. Toxicological information;
- ◆ Section 12. Ecological information;
- ◆ Section 13. Disposal considerations;
- ◆ Section 14. Transport information;
- ◆ Section 15. Regulatory information; and
- ◆ Section 16. Other information, including date of preparation or last revision.

The employer shall maintain in the workplace copies of the required safety data sheets for each hazardous chemical, and shall ensure that they are readily accessible during each work shift to employees when they are in their work area(s). (Electronic access is permitted as long as no barriers to immediate employee access in each workplace are created by such options.) Safety data sheets shall also be made readily available, upon request, to designated representatives.

Employee Information and Training 1910.1200(h)

Employers shall provide employees with information and training on hazardous chemicals in their work area at the time of their initial assignment, and whenever a new chemical hazard is introduced into their work area. Training and information topics must include:

- ◆ A description of any operations in an employees work area where hazardous chemicals are present, and the location of the written hazard communication program, including the required list(s) of hazardous chemicals, and safety data sheets.

- ◆ Methods used to detect the presence or release of a hazardous chemical in the work area
- ◆ The physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area;
- ◆ The measures employees can take to protect themselves from these hazards, such as appropriate work practices, emergency procedures, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to be used; and,
- ◆ The details of the hazard communication program developed by the employer, including an explanation of the labels received on shipped containers and the workplace labeling system used by their employer; the safety data sheet, including the order of information and how employees can obtain and use the appropriate hazard information.

NOTE: The employer should always utilize the hierarchy of controls as the primary means of eliminating occupational hazards, this method is listed below:

1. *Elimination (Most Effective)*
2. *Substitution*
3. *Engineering Controls*
4. *Administrative Controls*
5. *PPE (Least Effective)*