

## Hazard Communication – *Labeling*

Do you know what's in this container?  
It's water – right?



**WOULD YOU BET YOUR  
LIFE ON IT?**

The risk in this situation is obvious. Consider this scenario – you're working on your car and your hands are covered with oil, grease, dirt and brake fluid. You need to get cleaned up quickly because you have to attend your daughters dance recital in only 30 minutes. You're quickly running out of time and your hands are filthy.

You reach for an unlabeled clear glass container that you **KNOW** has mineral spirits in it. You know this because you put the mineral spirits in the container yourself only a week ago. As you pour the clear liquid on your left hand you begin to notice a warming, then burning sensation. Over the next few minutes your skin turns bright red and begins to blister. You are now in intense pain! What has just happened?

What you didn't know is that the mineral spirits (a clear liquid) were innocently replaced with sodium hypochlorite (a clear liquid and common swimming pool chemical). This was done when your 16 year old son was experimenting a few days ago for a class project. The pool chemical reacted violently with the petroleum based brake fluid, oil and grease on your hands and created a heat producing an exothermic chemical reaction – one that **CREATES** heat!

Now, take a look around your work area. Do you see unlabeled containers? What's in them? Water? Cleaning fluid? Windex?

It's simple – every container needs a label and every chemical needs to be in a correct container. It's not only logical to eliminate common mix-ups and hazards, it's required by the Hazard Communication Standard of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration – 29 CFR 1910.1200. It's the law!

**LABEL EVERY CONTAINER!**