

Hazard Communication – *MSDS*

The OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) requires that employers keep track of the chemicals that employees may be exposed to by keeping a database containing MSDS's (Material Safety Data Sheets). Aiding in this process is the requirement for all chemical manufacturers to create an MSDS for each chemical they produce and make it available to end users – companies.

An MSDS is a short, but detailed description of a substance's physical and chemical properties and how it can affect the health and safety of the employees that could be exposed to it. It can be paper or digital, but must contain detailed information about:

- The identity and/or name used on the labels of containers;
- Its chemical and common name(s), if the chemical is a single substance;
- The chemical and common name(s) of all ingredients;
- Physical and chemical characteristics (vapor pressure, flash point, etc.);
- Physical hazards of the chemical (fire, explosion, reactivity, etc.);
- Health hazards (signs/symptoms of exposure, medical conditions, etc.);
- The primary route(s) of entry – inhalation, absorption, ingestion;
- OSHA permissible exposure limit (PEL), ACGIH (www.acgih.org)* threshold limit value (TLV) and any other exposure limit used or recommended by the chemical manufacturer, importer, or employer preparing the material safety data sheet;
- Whether the chemical is listed in the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Annual Report on Carcinogens or is a potential carcinogen in the International Agency for Research on Cancer Monographs (www.iarc.fr), or by OSHA;
- Generally applicable precautions for safe handling which are known to the manufacturer, importer or employer preparing the material safety data sheet;
- Any applicable control measures which are known to the manufacturer, importer or employer;
- Emergency and first aid procedures associated with the chemical;
- Date of preparation of the material safety data sheet or the last change to it;
- Name, address, telephone number of the manufacturer, importer, employer.

Use your company's MSDS for the training of employees when they are hired, when their job responsibilities change, when new chemicals are introduced or when an incident or the passage of time warrants it.

Employees must be trained on the chemical safety driven issues that cover:

- Operations in their work area where hazardous chemicals are present; and,
- Location of the written hazard communication program;
- Methods and observations that may be used to detect hazardous chemical;
- Physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area;
- Measures employees can take to protect themselves;
- Details of the hazard communication program developed by the employer