



Date: 11/03/14

Toolbox Talk #23



HAZARD COMMUNICATION

Hazard Communication, also referred to as “HAZCOM” and “The Employee Right to Know Act” was developed to ensure that employers provide employees with important safety information for chemicals used in their workplace.

Hazard Communication requirements are aimed at reducing the risk of chemical-related occupational illnesses and injuries by making available specific information to help identify and evaluate hazardous chemicals in the workplace. Tools such as Container Labeling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) assist employers in identifying and communicating these hazards.

SDS: An SDS is a fact sheet developed by the manufacturer that contains information on all of the hazards associated with a particular chemical. It also provides guidance on how to protect your self from these hazards and emergency information/procedures in the event of an accident. You may obtain an SDS from the manufacturer or on-line at the EHS website.

Personnel must be trained to be able to read an MSDS and understand the hazards presented by various substances.

Container Label: Every container is required to have a label that lists all of the hazard information for the chemical it contains. If you use a generic container, such as a spray bottle, you must label it with all of the required information (see below).

SDS pages can be found on the web, obtained from the manufacturer, or can be downloaded from the EHS Website at:



If you need guidance on creating a label for a generic container, contact EHS.

Information Found In SDS

Identification and Manufacturer’s Information
Hazard Identification
Composition, Chemical Ingredients
First Aid
Fire Fighting Measures
Accidental Release Measures
Handling And Storage
Exposure Control/Personal Protection
Physical and chemical Properties
Stability and Reactivity
Toxicological, Ecological Information,
Disposal and Transportation Information

Information Required On Labels

Identity of the Hazardous Chemical
Appropriate Hazard Warnings
Chemical Manufacturers Information
First Aid Information
Chemical Ingredients

Environmental Health & Safety

Cambridge Campus
46 Blackstone St.
Cambridge MA, 02139
(617) 495-2060

Longwood Campus
4107 Ave. Louis Pasteur
Boston, MA 02115
(617) 432-1720

- Know where your work area’s MSDS binder is located or how to access online information.
- Familiarize yourself with chemical hazards in your workplace.
- Remember, an MSDS must be available for **every** chemical used in the workplace.
- **Every** container used to store a chemical must be labeled.
- Read the label and MSDS prior to using the chemical.
- Avoid contact with skin and eyes by utilizing the proper personal protective equipment (gloves, safety glasses, etc.).
- Store each chemical in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
- DO NOT dispose of excess or waste in a drain or trash can.
- Unless directed by the manufacturer, cleaning agents should **never** be mixed with one another.
- When portioning chemicals into separate containers such as generic spray bottles, employees must label these containers with the chemical’s name and a hazard warning briefly describing the hazardous effects of the chemical. This includes terms such as “flammable” and “causes lung damage.”