

# **HAZARD COMMUNICATION**

**(HAZCOM)**

## **Hazard Communication Standard 29 CFR 1910.1200**

### Purpose

- To ensure that the hazards of all chemicals produced in or imported into the United States are evaluated.
- To ensure that information concerning the hazards of chemicals is transmitted to employers and employees.
- To ensure that requirements for hazard communication in occupational settings are consistent nationwide, by preempting any legal requirements of a state, or a political subdivision of a state, pertaining to this subject.

## Coverage of HCS- Chemicals that are Hazards

- Physical Hazard – Any chemical that is:
  - A combustible liquid
  - A compressed gas
  - Explosive
  - Flammable
  - An organic peroxide
  - An oxidizer
  - Pyrophoric
  - Unstable (reactive)
  - Water-reactive
- Health Hazard – Any chemical that may produce acute or chronic health effects in exposed employees; examples are:
  - Carcinogens
  - Toxic or highly toxic agents
  - Reproductive toxins
  - Irritants
  - Corrosives
  - Sensitizers
  - Hepatotoxins
  - Nephrotoxins
  - Neurotoxins
  - Agents which act on the hematopoietic system
  - Agents which damage the lungs, skin, eyes, or mucous membranes

## Coverage of HCS – Who Has Responsibilities

- Chemical Manufactures
  - Evaluate hazards of chemicals
  - Provide labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) to employers to which they ship chemicals
  
- Importers and Distributors
  - Provide labels and MSDSs to employers to which they ship chemicals
  
- Employers that Produce, “Use” and/or store Chemicals
  - Inventory hazardous chemicals
  - Prepare and implements written program
  - Ensure that all in-plant containers are properly labeled
  - Ensure that MSDSs are obtained for all hazardous chemicals
  - Train employees

\* “Use” means to package, handle, react, emit, extract, generate as a byproduct, or transfer.

## Inventory of Hazardous Chemicals

- Include all chemicals that are hazards and have the potential for employee exposure
- Consider chemicals in all physical forms
  - Liquids
  - Solids
  - Gases
  - Vapors
  - Fumes
  - Mists
- Identify chemicals in containers, including pipes
- Consider chemicals generated in work operations; for example
  - Welding fumes
  - Dusts
  - Exhaust fumes

## Written Hazard Communication Program

- Reflects what you are doing in your workplace – generic plans must be adapted to specific conditions at your facility
- Includes all of the following
  - The hazardous chemicals present at the site
  - Who is to be responsible for the various aspects of the program in your facility
  - Where written materials will be made available to employees
  - How your facility will meet the requirements for
    - ✓ Labels and other forms of warning
    - ✓ Material safety data sheets
    - ✓ Employee information and training

## Labels and Other Forms of Warning

- Labels on products shipped by manufacturers, importers, and distributors include
  - Identity of the material
  - Appropriate hazard warnings
  - Name and address of the producer or other responsible party
- Labels on in-plant containers of hazardous chemicals include
  - Identity of the material (links the label, the MSDS, and the chemical inventory)
  - Appropriate hazard warnings (e.g., “flammable,” “causes lung damage”)
- Limited exemptions to labeling requirements exist for certain in-plant portable containers; see 29 CFR 1910.1200
- Labels must be legible, in English, and prominently displayed

## Material Safety Data Sheets

- Provided by chemical manufacturer, importer, or distributor with first shipment and anytime the information changes
- No specified format, only specific information requirements
- Must be obtained for all hazardous chemicals in the workplace before they are used
- Provide detailed information on each hazardous chemical, including
  - Potential hazardous effects
  - Physical and chemical characteristics
  - Recommendations for appropriate protective measures
- Must be readily accessible to employees when they are in their work areas during their workshifts; for example,
  - Paper copies may be kept in a central location
  - Computerized access may be available through terminals
  - Receiving the information over the phone is not acceptable except under the mobile worksite provision, 29 CFR 1910.1200(g)(9)

## Employee Information and Training

- Prior to assignment to work with a hazardous chemical that presents the potential for exposure and whenever the hazard changes
- “Exposure” or “Exposed” means that “an employee is subjected to a hazardous chemical in the course of employment through any route of entry (inhalation, ingestion, skin contact or absorption, etc.) and includes potential (e.g., accidental or possible) exposure”
- Training may be done either by
  - Individual chemicals, or
  - Categories of hazards (e.g., flammability or carcinogenicity)
- Employee information must include
  - Requirements of the Hazard Communication rule
  - Operations in their work area where hazardous chemicals are present
  - Location and availability of the written program, hazardous chemicals inventory, and MSDSs
- Employee training must include
  - Methods to detect presence or release of hazardous chemicals
  - Physical and health hazards of chemicals in work area
  - Measure to protect themselves from the hazards
  - Details of employer’s hazard communication program

## Checklist for Compliance

- ✓ Obtain a copy of the Hazard Communication Standard
- ✓ Read and understand the requirements
- ✓ Assign responsibility for tasks
- ✓ Prepare an Inventory of hazardous chemicals
- ✓ Ensure containers of hazardous chemicals are labeled
- ✓ Obtain MSDS for each hazardous chemical
- ✓ Prepare written program
- ✓ Make MSDSs available to workers
- ✓ Conduct training of workers
- ✓ Establish procedures to maintain current program
- ✓ Establish procedures to evaluate effectiveness

❖ Assistance is available from the Installation Safety Management Office, 1500 Porter Street - Contact Mrs. Mangrum, extension 3153.