

Hazard Communications

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The purpose of a Hazard Communication Program is to help employees understand the potential hazards of the chemicals in use at their worksite. This education, required by the Occupational Safety & Health Act, is also called Workers' Right to Know. Failure to meet all the requirements of the law is OSHA's most frequently cited violation. One of the reasons for this is many employers, supervisors and workers think chemicals are just too complex to explain and to understand. As a result, there is a temptation to avoid the subject.

Hazard Communication is very important, however, because it can protect employees from dangers that may be present when chemicals are being used. One very important key to a Hazard Communication Program is the Material Safety Data Sheet. These sheets tell you 'everything you need to know' about a specific chemical. If you read the MSDS you will be able to determine:

1. The health hazards associated with any chemical you are using or are exposed to.
2. How flammable the product is, and at what temperature it may ignite?
3. The reactivity of the chemical with water or other agents-will it explode, etc.?
4. What personal protective equipment (PPE) is needed to work with the product?

Every employee should be able to answer, and should remember, the following questions:

1. Where are the MSDSs kept for the chemicals I am exposed to?
2. What kinds of hazards do I face when I use-or misuse this chemical?
3. Do I understand the emergency procedures to follow in the event of a spill?
4. Have I inspected my personal protective equipment to be sure that it will protect me properly when and if I need to use it?

A convenient tool for reviewing the hazards and control of chemicals in your operation is an MSDS Information Review form. Critical information can be transferred to this form and most people find it more 'user friendly' than the full Material Safety Data Sheet. The complete MSDS can be reviewed when more specific details are needed, and should always be available.

Chemistry is a complex subject, and it's hard to understand everything about the dozens sometimes hundreds of chemicals being used at work.

If one or two MSDSs are reviewed at regular safety meetings, using an MSDS Information Review form, everyone will soon better understand the chemicals they work with, and know how to protect themselves from injury or illness.

An MSDS Information Review form is provided here for safety meeting use.

MSDS Information Review:

Chemical Common Name: _____

Review Date _____

ALSO KNOWN AS: _____

HAZARD RATING INDEX	(Fill In From Key Below)
HEALTH HAZARD RATING	
FLAMMABILITY HAZARD RATING	
REACTIVITY HAZARD RATING	
PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT TO BE USED	

Hazard Rating Index Key

Health Hazard

- 4- EXTREME: Highly toxic may be fatal on short term exposure. Special protective equipment required.
- 3- SERIOUS : Toxic - avoid inhalation or skin contact.
- 2- MODERATE: Moderately toxic - may be harmful if inhaled or absorbed.
- 1- LIGHT : Slightly toxic - may cause slight irritation.
- 0- MINIMAL: All chemicals have some degree of toxicity.

Flammability Hazard

- 4- EXTREME: extremely flammable gas or liquid, flash point below 73o F
- 3- SERIOUS : Flammable -flash point 73 o F. to 100o F.
- 2- MODERATE: Combustible-requires moderate heating to ignite. Flash point 100o F. to 200o F.
- 1- LIGHT : Slightly combustible - requires strong heating to ignite.
- 0- MINIMAL: Will not burn under normal conditions.

Reactivity Hazard

- 4- EXTREME: Explosive at room temperature.
- 3- SERIOUS : May explode, if shocked, heated under confinement or mixed with water.
- 2- MODERATE: Unstable, may react with water.
- 1- LIGHT : May react if heated or mixed with water.
- 0- MINIMAL: Normally stable, does not react with water.

Protective Equipment (circle all that apply)

A - Safety Glasses

B - Safety Glasses, Gloves

C - Safety Glasses, Gloves, Synthetic Apron

D - Face Shield, Gloves, Synthetic Apron

E - Safety Glasses, Gloves, Dust Respirators

F - Safety Glasses, Gloves, Synthetic Apron, Dust Respirators

G - Safety Glasses, Gloves, Vapor Respirator

H - Splash Goggles, Gloves, Synthetic Apron, Vapor Respirators

I - Safety Glasses, Gloves, Dust & Vapor Respirator

J - Splash Goggles, Gloves, Synthetic Apron, Dust & Vapor Respirators

K - Air Line Hood or Mask, Gloves, Full Suit, Boots

X - Ask your supervisor for special handling instructions

Z - None Required

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Have you reviewed the M.S.D.S Sheet for this safety topic?

Yes____ No____ N/A____

Comments:
