

North Carolina Division of Air Quality

Hazard Communication

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1. Introduction

The Division of Air Quality has a commitment to provide each of its employees a safe and healthy work environment. It is recognized that essential procedures frequently require the use of chemicals that have potentially hazardous properties. When using these substances, it is important that workers are aware of the identity and toxicity or other hazardous properties of the chemical. It is the Division's goal to provide Hazard Communication information to everyone that use or may be potentially exposed to chemicals.

OSHA promulgated the Hazard Communication Standard (29CFR1910.1200) to establish uniform requirements for the evaluation of chemical hazards by the manufacturer. The standard helps to guarantee that all employees receive consistent and accurate information about the hazardous substances they work with. It also establishes a formal framework by which health and safety information is communicated.

There are four basic elements, which compose the standard:

1. Hazard Evaluation
2. Container Labeling
3. Material Safety Data Sheets
4. Employee Training

2. Responsibility

The success of the Hazard Communication Program depends upon the cooperation of every employee and their supervisor. Supervisors are responsible to help their employees understand the potential hazards of all the materials in their work area, consult the MSDS for the specifics concerning the hazardous chemicals they work with, and follow the appropriate work practices established to protect their health and safety. Active employee participation in the Hazard Communication Program will result in the continued reduction of the incidence of chemical related illnesses and injuries at Division of Air Quality

3. Hazard Evaluation

The Hazard Evaluation element requires the manufacturer to evaluate each substance they produce for potential hazards. Any substance listed in 29CFR1910, Subpart Z; the Threshold Limit Values for Chemical Substances and Physical Agents in the Work Environment by ACGIH will be considered a health or physical hazard.

The manufacturer must prepare a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) to describe the hazards of the substance and provide an MSDS to each purchaser. DAQ requires that the MSDS be readily available in the area where employees use or store the chemical.

Every hazardous substance known to be present in the workplace will be listed on the "Hazardous Chemicals Inventory." The "Hazardous Chemicals Inventory" will be updated at least annually to accurately reflect all the hazardous chemicals present in the workplace. The identity of the substance appearing on the "Hazardous Chemicals Inventory" will be the same name that appears on the manufacturer's label and the MSDS for that substance.

Areas within the Division of Air Quality known to use or have exposure to hazardous chemicals are and shall maintain a Hazardous Chemicals Inventory:

- Electronics and Calibrations Branch Shop
- Ambient Monitoring Hydrocarbon Laboratory
- Particulate Matter Weighing Laboratory
- Toxics Laboratory
- Mobile Sources Laboratory

4. Container Labeling

No hazardous chemicals will be accepted for use at the Division of Air Quality, or shipped to any location within Air Quality, unless labeled with the following information:

- Identity of the hazardous chemical(s)
- Appropriate hazard warnings
- Name and address of the chemical manufacturer, importer or other responsible party

No hazardous chemical will be used in the work area unless labeled with at least the following information:

- Identity of the hazardous chemical(s)
- Appropriate hazard warnings

All labels will be legible, in English, and prominently displayed on the container.

The Hazard Communication Program does not require a label on portable containers that hazardous chemicals are transferred from labeled containers, and that are intended only for the immediate use of the employee who performs the transfer. However, by labeling the portable container appropriately, you can help prevent the accidental misuse of the material by others.

5. Material Safety Data Sheets

The OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (29CFR1910.1200) requires Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals. Manufacturers produce MSDS, which summarizes the potential hazards of a chemical. The MSDS describes how to use the chemical, store it and safe disposal method. All MSDS have several sections: Material Identification; Ingredients; Physical and Chemical Data; Hazard Classes; Fire and Explosion Data; Health Hazard Information; Reactivity Data; Spill, Leak and Disposal Procedures; Special Protection Information; and Special Precautions.

MSDS will be readily accessible to any employee at any time during the work shift. All MSDS provided by suppliers must be maintained. Immediate access may be by electronic means. If the area has a computer capable of accessing a comprehensive MSDS file during all working hours, and every employee of that area has the computer training for access, then a hard copy file may not be necessary

No hazardous material will be used unless the employee has access to the MSDS.

In a work area where it may be more appropriate to address the hazards of a process rather than individual hazardous chemicals, MSDS may be kept in the form of operating procedures and maybe designed to cover groups of hazardous chemicals. However, all required information would be provided for each hazardous chemical, in a form that is readily accessible during each work shift to employees when they are in their work area(s).

- Electronics & Calibrations Branch (ECB) maintains MSDSs for materials used in a printed format enclosed in a binder in the ECB office area.
- Toxics Protection Branch maintains MSDSs for materials used in the Toxics Laboratory in an electronic format housed in a computer at the Toxics Laboratory.

6. Employee Training

Each employee will receive a brief introduction to the Hazard Communication Program as part of his or her orientation by the supervisor. The session will cover the various elements of the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard in general terms and describes DAQ's program for compliance. The supervisor will provide additional in-depth training about the specific hazards of the individual's workplace. The supervisor will also supply further training whenever the nature of the hazards changes.

All employees who work with hazardous chemicals will receive annual hazard communication training as part of the Division of Air Quality employee training program.