
ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *New Hazard Communication Standard: Global Harmonized System*

Almost every country has different labeling and classification criteria for shipping, handling and managing chemicals; including the storage, treatment, and disposal of chemicals, chemical waste and their environmental controls. Because of this, the United Nations stepped in to standardize a common way of identifying chemicals and how to use them safely for all countries. This created the new **Global Harmonized System (GHS)**. In addition, it also required the need to change the communication format of the chemical's **Safety Data Sheets (SDS)**.

Under the former **Hazard Communication Standard, (§1910.1200 or §1926.95)**, the safety objective for all Employers was to provide Employees the **"Right-To-Know"** about chemical hazards that could be harmful to them when the exposure to chemical hazards exist or could reasonably be expected to develop in the workplace when employees handle or use chemicals. Again, the problem was that the chemical information was too difficult to understand thus creating a situation where Employers were not being very effective in facilitating the chemical hazard information to employees. This resulted in employees not really understanding or realizing the severity of the chemical hazards they were being exposed to. **Under the new Global Harmonized System (GHS) requirements, the safety objective is for ALL employees to have the "Right-To-Understand". Effective immediately, every Employer has until December 1, 2013 to train all their employees on the new GHS requirements. Failure could result in the issuance of OSHA fines.**



Under the new requirements, chemical manufacturers from all counties will now be required to follow one standardized systematic format for classifying and labeling chemicals and to provide the same detailed information to the end user. The main objective of GHS is to identify any chemical that is **HAZARDOUS** and contains **physical, health** and/or **environmental hazards** that can be harmful and/or threatening to humans.



The GHS - Safety Data Sheets (SDS) – is a detailed source of information for learning about the chemical's characteristics and how to safely use chemicals. All SDS will soon be rewritten to follow the new international GHS format for the classification and labeling of all chemicals. The SDS must contain the characteristics and hazards of each chemical broken down into 16 sections. The newly formatted **SDS** will replace the former **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)**.

Chemical Labels – are the key sources of information for learning about how to safely use chemicals. All chemical labels will soon be reformatted to follow the new GHS requirements and must include the use of nine (9) standard Pictograms, as seen on the left. With GHS, chemical labels and Safety Data Sheets from manufacturers in many counties will now offer the same information in the new format. Chemical Manufacturers have until June 2015 to be in compliance.

Chemical Labels that are compliant with GHS must have five (5) things:

1. **Product Identifier** – this gives the name of the chemical, part numbers or other Identifiers, and the name and address of the manufacturer or supplier.
 2. **Signal Words** that tell us about the hazard level of the chemical. **Danger** is for severe hazards and **Warning** is for less severe hazards. Sometimes there is no signal word, but that does not mean that the product is hazard free.
 3. **Hazard Statement** that describes what kind of harm the chemical can cause.
 4. **Pictograms** which are symbols that instantly identify the kind of hazard the chemical poses.
 5. **Precautionary Statements** that describe what we need to do to be safe when using the chemical.
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HCS PICTOGRAMS & HAZARDS		
<p style="text-align: center;">Health Hazard</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carcinogen • Mutagenicity • Reproductive Toxicity • Respiratory Sensitizer • Target Organ Toxicity • Aspiration Toxicity 	<p style="text-align: center;">Flame</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flammables • Pyrophorics • Self-Heating • Emits Flammable Gas • Self-Reactives • Organic Peroxides 	<p style="text-align: center;">Exclamation Mark</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritant (skin and eye) • Skin Sensitizer • Acute Toxicity (harmful) • Narcotic Effects • Respiratory Tract Irritant • Hazardous to Ozone Layer (Non Mandatory)
<p style="text-align: center;">Gas Cylinder</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gases under pressure 	<p style="text-align: center;">Corrosion</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skin Corrosion/ burns • Eye Damage • Corrosive to Metals 	<p style="text-align: center;">Exploding Bomb</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosives • Self-Reactives • Organic Peroxides
<p style="text-align: center;">Flame over Circle</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxidizers 	<p style="text-align: center;">Environment (Non-mandatory)</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Toxicity 	<p style="text-align: center;">Skull & Crossbones</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)

Ensure to follow these simple steps:

1. SDS Stations are set up containing the SDS Manual and are immediately accessible to employees.
2. ALL employees understand where to find the company's **SDS Manual** containing the company's written Chemical Safety - GHS HazCom Program, an Approved Chemical Inventory List and *Safety Data Sheets* for each chemical.
3. All chemicals containers have a proper **GHS Label** and all employees are trained to understand the Pictograms
4. All chemical labels include the *Pictograms*, *Product Name* and information regarding the *Product Hazards*
5. Replace torn, damaged, defaced and unreadable chemical labels
6. Label smaller containers that have chemicals were transferred into them when they will be used for more than one work shift or if it will be used by more than one employee.