

GENERAL INDUSTRY

Safety education for Clients of Proudfit Insurance provided by the insurance specialists at Proudfit Insurance



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SAFETY

GHS Standard for Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

Introduction

On March 20, 2012, OSHA issued a new regulation changing the current Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) to conform to the Global Harmonized System of Classifying and Labeling Chemicals (GHS). GHS was developed by the United Nations to give workers worldwide the right to understand the dangers of the chemicals they work with.

What does this mean for you? Adopting GHS will largely affect the labels and safety data sheets (SDS) that are required for the hazardous materials we work with. Chemical safety in the workplace is a priority. Although we work with potentially hazardous materials on a regular basis, we can maintain a safe working environment if we use the chemicals as they were intended and follow necessary safety precautions. As your employer, we must ensure that SDSs are readily accessible to you. As we transition to GHS, we will train staff working with chemicals where to access safety information and how to safely handle hazardous materials used in the workplace.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) Changes

Under GHS, material safety data sheets (MSDS) will be called safety data sheets, or SDS. SDSs provide workers with procedures for handling or working with a hazardous substance in a safe manner. This includes instructions for safe use and potential hazards associated with a particular material or product. An SDS should provide complete information about the chemical product that allows employers and workers to obtain relevant and accurate information.

Hazard Classifications

Under the new GHS rule, all hazards will be classified according to specific, detailed criteria. This offers us less flexibility than we had in the past for classifying materials. The revised SDSs use three hazard classifications:

- Health hazards (10 categories)
- Physical hazards (16 categories)
- Environmental hazards (one category)

New SDS Format

The old HazCom standard indicated what information should be on the MSDS, but did not dictate the format or the order in which the information needed to be presented. The new SDS contains the same content as the 16 sections from the current MSDS, but now the new format and organization of these sections are required. The major difference between the current MSDS and the revised standard is Sections 2 and 3 are switched.

The SDS should provide a clear description of the data used to identify the hazards. Personnel will be trained to recognize and adhere to this new format:

GHS Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

Section 1 Identification



This section includes:

- Product name
- Manufacturer or distributor name, address, phone number
- Emergency phone number
- Recommended use and restrictions on use

Section 2 Hazard(s) identification

This section includes:

- All hazards regarding the chemical
- Required label elements (including precautionary statements and hazard symbols)

Section 3 Composition/information on ingredients

This section includes:

- Information on chemical ingredients (The chemical identity, common names and synonyms, the CAS and EC numbers, and impurities and stabilizing additives which are themselves classified and which contribute to the classification of the substance).
- Trade secret claims (The manufacturer may be able to withhold ingredient information if any ingredients are trade secrets. Keep in mind, each state has different laws regarding this.)

Section 4 First-aid measures

This section includes:

- Important symptoms or effects
- Required treatment

Section 5 Fire-fighting measures

This section lists:

- Suitable extinguishing techniques
- Equipment
- Chemical hazards from fire

Section 6 Accidental release measures

This section lists:

- Emergency procedures
- Protective equipment
- Proper methods of containment and cleanup

Section 7 Handling and storage

This section lists:

- Precautions for safe handling and storage, including incompatibilities.

Section 8 Exposure controls/personal protection

This section lists:

- OSHA's Permissible Exposure Limits (PELs)
- Threshold limit values (TLVs)
- Appropriate engineering controls
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)



Section 9 Physical and chemical properties

This section lists:

- The chemical's characteristics

Section 10 Stability and reactivity

This section lists:

- Chemical stability and possibility of hazardous reactions

Section 11 Toxicological information

This section includes:

- Routes of exposure
- Related symptoms
- Acute and chronic effects
- Numerical measures of toxicity

Section 12 Ecological information

Other agencies regulate this information.

This may be included, but OSHA does not require this section.

Section 13 Disposal considerations

Other agencies regulate this information.

This may be included, but OSHA does not require this section.

Section 14 Transport information

Other agencies regulate this information.

This may be included, but OSHA does not require this section.

Section 15 Regulatory information

Other agencies regulate this information.

This may be included, but OSHA does not require this section.

Section 16 Other information, including date of preparation or last revision

This section includes:

- The date of preparation or last revision

Updating Information on SDS

Clients of Proudfit Insurance will update the information on an SDS as soon as we receive information that requires revision. This is any information that changes the GHS classification and leads to a change in the label information or information that may affect the SDS.

Compliance Timeline

By Dec. 1, 2013, employers are required to have trained workers to recognize and understand the new label elements and SDSs. By June 1, 2016, employers must update alternative workplace labeling and hazard communication program, and provide additional employee training for any newly identified physical or health hazards. As we transition to GHS, we will comply with either the final GHS standard, the old HazCom standard or both.