



## Safety Subscription Employee Training Hazard Communication Standard

### ***Become Familiar with the Rule***

The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is based on a simple concept -that *employees have both a need and a right to know the hazards and identities of the chemicals they are exposed to when working*. They also need to know what protective measures are available to prevent adverse effects from occurring. The HCS (29 CFR 1910.1200) is designed to provide employees with the information they need.

Under the provisions of the Hazard Communication Standard, employers are responsible for informing employees of the hazards and the identities of workplace chemicals to which they are exposed.

Recently the United States agreed to the **Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals**. This simply means that the material safety data sheet (MSDS) for chemicals will look the same in all nations across the globe. It is the agreed United Nation's standard.

*By December 1, 2013 all employers subject to the Hazard Communication Standard are required to review the changes and the conversion to GHS with their employees. This is the training you will share with your employees during the implementation period.*

In fact, the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) has always been the rule that requires employers to provide training and chemical hazard information to their employees. The requirement of maintaining an inventory and the material safety data sheets (MSDS) for chemical found in the workplace is the most commonly know portion of the rule. Having a Safety Supervisor, MSDSs, monthly training and a written Safety Plan (*or Hazard Communication Program*) makes up the rule.

### ***Identify Responsible Staff***

Simply stated this is the Safety Supervisor. Hazard Communication is an ongoing program in the facility. In order to have a successful program, it is necessary to assign responsibility for both the initial and ongoing activities that have to be undertaken to comply with the rule. For any safety and health program, success depends on commitment and possibly a change in behavior. This will only occur if employers understand the program, and are committed to its success, and if employees are motivated by the people presenting the information to them.

### ***Identify Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace***

The Standard requires a list of hazardous chemicals in the workplace as part of the written hazard communication program. The list will serve as an inventory of everything for which a MSDS must be maintained.

The best way to prepare a comprehensive list is to survey the workplace. Purchasing records may also help. Employers should establish purchasing procedures that result in MSDSs being received before a material is used in the workplace. Check your files against the inventory you have just compiled to ensure that an MSDS exists for each potentially hazardous chemical. If any are missing, contact your supplier and request one.

What is new is the format of the MSDS changing to the globally harmonized system or GHS standard and becoming known as **Safety Data Sheets or SDS** which look similar to MSDS and contain the same information but will uniformly convey that information in all languages augmented by the use of universally accepted hazard pictograms.



***Preparing and Implementing a Hazard Communication Program***

All workplaces where employees are exposed to hazardous chemicals must have a written plan which describes how the standard will be implemented in that facility. The plan does not have to be lengthy or complicated. It is intended to be a blueprint for implementation of your program—an assurance that all aspects of the requirements have been addressed.

Add the facility specific information and the name of the Safety Supervisor to the template plan provided here. Add any additional site specific information to the plan and keep a copy of this written plan in the MSDS binder or readily available in case of an OSHA inspection.

Use the attached training material to conduct Employee Awareness Training on HCS, GHS and the new SDS format including the pictograms and labels that will be used on drums, totes and tanks in the shop. Show the Label example and the written Haz Comm Program during training. Display the MSDS or SDS Binder if possible.