

Safety Talk

Material Safety Data Sheets

Training is a major component of the HazCom standard and an important part of that training deals with a hazardous chemical's Material Safety Data Sheet or MSDS. After your company has evaluated and catalogued the hazardous chemicals in the workplace, they will then collect the necessary MSDSs and store them in an easily accessible location. Keep in mind that the inventory is ever-changing. When new chemicals are introduced to the workplace they will be added to the inventory. So it makes sense that the MSDSs will also change.

An MSDS is a detailed information sheet that is prepared and supplied by the manufacturer, supplier or importer of the chemical. It must include the following information:

- Chemical Identity- this is the name that is used on the chemical's container label. It can be the common or trade name or the chemical name.
- Physical and Chemical Characteristics- every chemical has specific characteristics that are unique to it and help identify it. These may include vapor pressure, flash point and melting point.
- Physical Hazards- these are hazards that can harm the body without coming in direct contact with the chemical. This includes chemicals that are potentially dangerous because of the possibility of explosion, fire or reactivity.
- Health Hazards- there are hazards that cause an individual's health to be compromised. These include any signs and symptoms of exposure and any medical conditions that are recognized as being aggravated by exposure to the chemical.

- Primary Route of Entry- there is three ways that a hazardous chemical can enter the body: through contact with the skin, by being swallowed or by being breathed in. The primary route is the most probable way that an individual chemical will enter the body.
- Exposure Limits- these are limits to a worker's safe exposure recommended by the chemical manufacturer, importer or supplier.
- Carcinogenic- whether the hazardous chemical is listed as a cancer causing agent by OSHA or several other reporting groups.
- Precautions for Safe Handling and Use- any applicable precautions for safe handling and use that the manufacturer or supplier know of. This will include appropriate hygienic practices, protective measures and procedures for the cleanup of spills and leaks.
- Control Measures- these are recognized methods for the controlling of the hazards of a chemical. This includes possible engineering controls, work practices and PPE.
- Manufacturer, Supplier Information- the name, address and telephone number of the manufacturer, supplier, importer or responsible party who can provide additional information on the hazardous chemical.

By being familiar with the information on an MSDS, you can help keep safe while working with chemicals on the worksite.

Discussion Questions

Who is responsible for preparing and supplying the MSDSs?

What is meant by the "Primary Route of Entry"?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/___

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date