

# Hazard Communication OSHA Standard

## Goal

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This training program assists employees in understanding and complying with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard.

## Objectives

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Through training, workers will learn to understand and apply the Hazard Communication (HazCom) Standard to their workplace.

## Introduction

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OSHA established the Hazard Communication, "Workers' Right to Know" Standard, 29 CFR 1910.1200 in 1983. OSHA developed the standard to establish uniform requirements in all states and jurisdictions. The purpose of the standard is to reduce the incidence of chemical-related illnesses and injuries. It requires employers to communicate the hazards of working with chemicals to their employees. The standard applies to any chemical, which is known to be present in the workplace that employees may be exposed to under normal working conditions or in the event of a foreseeable emergency.



## Responsibilities

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Employers must comply with these requirements:

- Inform all workers (including contractors), through training programs, about the hazardous chemicals they might encounter in the workplace, the effects of the chemical hazards, and actions to protect themselves from the hazards;
- Label all hazardous chemical containers properly;
- Obtain and make available to employees a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each hazardous chemical used at the facility; and
- Establish a written hazard communication program specifying training procedures, proper labeling, and how to obtain MSDSs.

## Procedures

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Procedures for implementation of the standard are as follows:

- Assign the responsibility for implementing the program to one person, who will obtain a copy of the 29 CFR 1910.1200 and will read and understand the standard's requirements;
- Perform a hazard assessment in your facility;
- List all chemicals and raw materials used in the workplace; and
- Note the quantity used, where it is used, who is exposed, the type of hazard and where the MSDS is located.
- Determine which of the chemicals on your list are exempted from the standard;
- Assign one person to maintain and upgrade MSDSs;
- Make MSDSs readily accessible to employees in known locations;
- Assign one person the responsibility for ensuring all hazardous chemical containers are properly labeled; and
- Ensure employees use only labeled containers and do not deface or remove the labels.

The following items have labeling requirements specified by other agencies, like the FDA:

- Fungicides, insecticides and rodenticides;
- Food;
- Food additives;
- Drugs;
- Cosmetics;
- Medical or veterinary products;
- Wine, beer, and distilled spirits intended for non-industrial use; and
- Consumer products.

Label containers in English with:

- The identity of the chemical;
- A hazard warning (such as flammable, corrosive, etc.); and

- The name and address of the manufacturer, or other responsible party.

Exceptions to labeling requirement:

- Containers, like buckets, may not require a label if used to carry quantities of chemicals for immediate use;
- Pipes and piping systems do not require labeling unless exposure is likely through leaks or repair of the system. However, employees must be informed of the identity and hazards of the chemicals contained in the pipes; and
- Alternate labels like signs, placards, or written operating procedures may be posted in areas where fixed process containers like degreaser baths, reactor vessels, etc., are located.

Procedures for the hazard communication program must be written and contain the following information:

- A list of hazardous chemicals in each work area;
- Location of MSDSs;
- Container labeling procedures;
- Identity of the person responsible for labeling;
- Procedures for obtaining and maintaining MSDSs;
- Description of the employee training program; and
- Procedures to inform contractors of chemical hazards.
- Inform and train employees on chemical hazards:
- Where hazardous chemicals are located;
- Physical and health hazards of each chemical or class of chemical;
- How to read and understand MSDSs
- Hazard communication rule requirements; and
- What personal protective equipment to use.
- All new employees and employees assigned new tasks where hazardous chemicals are used must be trained for routine and unexpected encounters with chemical hazards.
- Written training procedures must be incorporated into the company's hazard communication program and training records for each employee retained.



## Review Questions

1. Employees need to be trained in understanding Material Safety Data Sheets.  
True or False?
2. All workers should participate in HazCom training.  
True or False?
3. "Proper labeling" \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. must be in English
  - b. must identify the chemical
  - c. must contain a hazard warning
  - d. must contain the name and address of the responsible party
  - e. all of the above
4. Employees should be able to find Material Safety Data Sheets
  - a. locked in the Safety Officer's desk
  - b. in 'Right to Know' stations in or near their work areas
  - c. in the employee break room

## Answers to review questions:

1. True
2. True
3. E. All of the above.
4. B. In 'Right to Know' stations

## Resources

The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI/DWC) Resource Center offers a workers' health and safety video tape library. Call (512) 804-4620 for more information or visit our web site at [www.tdi.state.tx.us](http://www.tdi.state.tx.us).

Disclaimer: Information contained in this training program is considered accurate at time of publication.

The Texas Department of Insurance,  
Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI/DWC)  
E-mail [resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:resourcecenter@tdi.state.tx.us)  
or call 1-800-687-7080 for more information.

*Safety Violations Hotline*  
**1-800-452-9595**  
[safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:safetyhotline@tdi.state.tx.us)