



TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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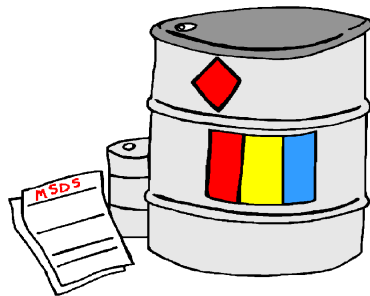


January

Hazardous Communication Act

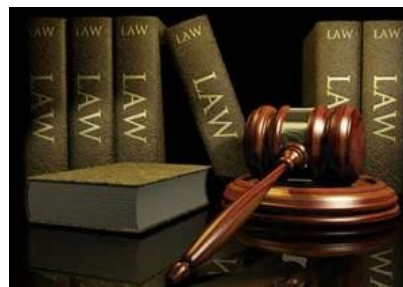


What Is Hazard Communication? Why Is it needed?



Under the terms of the Hazard Communication Standard, employers are responsible for informing employees/offenders of the hazards and the identities of workplace chemicals to which they are exposed. About 32 million workers work with and are potentially exposed to one or more chemical hazards. There are an estimated 650,000 existing chemical products, and hundreds of new ones being introduced annually. This poses a serious problem for exposed workers and their em-

ployers. Chemical exposure may cause or contribute to many serious health effects such as heart ailments, damage to central nervous system, kidney and lung damage, as well as sterility, cancer, burns, and rashes. Some chemicals may also be safety hazards and have the potential to cause fires and explosions and other serious accidents.



Because of the seriousness of these safety and health problems, and because many employers and employees/offenders know little or nothing about them, the Texas Health

and Safety Code Chapter 502 Hazard Communication Act was developed. The Texas Legislature, in 1993, revised the Texas Hazard Communication Act (HCA), Chapter 502 of the Health and Safety Code. The Act applies to public employers over whom OSHA does not have jurisdiction, including the state (which includes all state agencies) and its political subdivisions, public schools, colleges and universities, river authorities and publicly owned utilities, and volunteer emergency service organizations.

The basic goal of the standard is to ensure employers and employees/offenders know about chemical hazards in the workplace, and how to protect themselves. This should help to reduce the occurrence of illness and injuries due to

chemical exposure.

The Hazard Communication Act establishes uniform requirements to ensure that the hazards of all chemicals imported, produced, or used in Texas workplaces are evaluated, and that this hazard information is communicated to exposed employees/offenders.

Training



TDCJ Environmental Branch policy EA-05.09 (Rev 3) encompasses the required training as well as standardizes training documentation in order to comply with the Texas Hazard Communication Act. The policy also provides the department heads guidance on how to develop, implement, and maintain an effective and comprehensive hazard communication program that includes provisions for secondary container labeling, collection

and availability of safety data sheets, and an employee/offender training program.

What are Safety Data Sheets and why are they needed?



The Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is a detailed information bulletin prepared by the manufacturer or importer of a chemical, that describes the physical and chemical properties, physical and health hazards, routes of exposure, precautions for safe handling and use, emergency and first-aid procedures, and control measures.

Chemical manufacturers and importers must develop an SDS for each hazardous chemical they produce or import, and must provide the SDS automatically at the time of the initial

shipment of a hazardous chemical to a downstream distributor or user. Distributors also must ensure that downstream employers are similarly provided an SDS. Each SDS must be in English and include information regarding the specific chemical identity of the hazardous chemical(s) involved and their common names. (A "Hazardous Chemical" is any chemical that is identified by the manufacturer as having the capability of producing adverse effects on the health of an individual.)

In addition, information must be provided on the physical and chemical characteristics of the hazardous chemical; known acute and chronic health effects and related health information; exposure limits; whether the chemical is considered to be a carcinogen by the National Toxicology Program (NTP), International Agency on Research for Cancer (IARC), or OSHA; precautionary measures; emergency and first-aid procedures; and the identification (name, address, and telephone number) of the organization responsible for

preparing the sheet.

Copies of the SDS for hazardous chemicals in a given worksite are to be readily accessible to employees/offenders in that area. As a source of detailed information on hazards, they must be readily available to workers during all shifts of work. SDSs have no prescribed format.



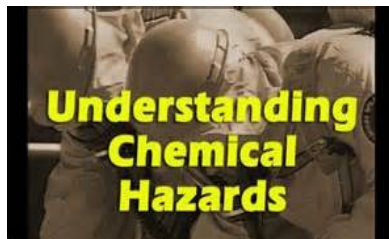
TDCJ unit medical departments are also required to maintain a copy of an SDS on every chemical that is used on the facility. Each SDS must be readily accessible in an emergency, when time is essential for successful treatment.

Employee/Offender Education Program

Each facility/workplace must maintain a written education and training pro-

gram for employees/offenders who use or handle hazardous chemicals. The education and training program must include, as appropriate:

- Information on interpreting labels and SDSs, and the relationship between those two methods of hazard communication.
- The location by work area, acute and chronic effects, and safe handling of hazardous chemicals known to be present in the employee's/offender's work area and to which the employees/offenders may be exposed.



- The proper use of protective equipment and first aid treatment to be used, with respect to the hazardous chemi-

icals to which the employees/offenders may be exposed.

- General safety instructions on the handling, cleanup procedures, and disposal of hazardous chemicals.

Note: Training may be conducted by categories of chemicals.

Supervisors should act as helpers and trainers for employees/offenders with poor English or reading skills to assist them in understanding how to use chemicals properly and how to avoid misusing them. Training is essential and may involve teaching employees/offenders in their native language.

Labeling



A label on an existing container

of a hazardous chemical may not be removed or defaced unless it is not legible, inaccurate, or does not conform to the OSHA standard (29 CFR 1910.1200(f)), or other applicable labeling requirement.

Primary and secondary containers must be labeled with at least the identity appearing on the SDS. Secondary containers must be labeled with at least the identity appearing on the SDS and appropriate hazard warnings.

An employee/offender may not be required to work with a hazardous chemical from an unlabeled container, except a portable container intended for the immediate use of the employee/offender who performs the transfer.

Safety and Health Program Management Guidelines



Effective management of worker safety and health protection is a major factor in reducing the extent and severity of work-related injuries and illnesses and their related costs. To assist employers and employees in developing effective safety and health programs, The State Office of Risk Management (S.O.R.M.) has developed Risk Management for Texas State Agencies (RMTSA) guidelines to follow which applies to all state agencies.

Ensuring employees/offenders are knowledgeable in regards to the hazardous chemicals they come into contact with, and how to avoid unnecessary exposures, will significantly reduce injuries in the workplace.

References

- SORM/RMTSA http://www.sorm.state.tx.us/?page_id=4089
- Environmental Advisory EA -5.09
- U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration

OSHA 3084

1998 (Revised)

Chemical Hazard Communication

- SORM RMTSA Vo. III section two Chapter 7.12



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