

GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS

WHMIS 2015



The adoption of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) in WHMIS harmonized Canada's chemical hazard communication system with those of other countries. This is a guide to WHMIS 2015 components.

EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Employers must continue to educate and train employees about hazardous products in their workplace after harmonization. Revised training programs, developed in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, will include:

- New hazard pictograms¹;
- New hazard classes²;
- New labels and their required elements, such as signal words and precautionary statements³;
- The meaning of all signal words and hazard statements found on labels and SDSs in the workplace;
- The new SDS format and how to locate information needed to work safely with a product; and
- Worksite-specific training on measures to work safely with hazardous products.

After the transition period, SDSs and labels for products originating within and outside Canada will share common elements, simplifying education and training.



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EMPLOYER DUTIES

- Educate and train employees on the hazards and safe use of products.
- Ensure proper labelling of hazardous products.
- Prepare workplace labels and SDSs, as necessary.
- Provide employees with access to up-to-date SDSs.

WORKER DUTIES

- Comply with the *Safety Act* and *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*.
- Cooperate in receiving instruction, education, and training on WHMIS labels and Safety Data Sheets.
- Ensure their own health and safety and that of others in or near the place of employment by:
 - Checking for a label;
 - Reading, understanding and following instructions on the label and SDS;
 - Following the safety procedures when working with hazardous product; and
 - Labelling a new container when a hazardous product is transferred or decanted.

SUPPLIER LABELS

New requirements for supplier labels include signal words and hazard statements, and standardized precautionary statements. Information for most label elements is standardized. Most hazard classes and categories will have a prescribed (standardized) pictogram, signal word, hazard statement and precautionary statements. The pictogram, signal word and hazard statement must be grouped together. There is no longer a requirement for a hatched border. Supplier labels will continue to be required in both English and French.³

WORKPLACE LABELS

Requirements for workplace labels continue to include the product name (matching the SDS product name), safe-handling precautions and a reference to the SDS.³

SAFETY DATA SHEETS

SDSs follow a standardized format. There are new information requirements.⁴ SDSs will no longer include an expiry date. Suppliers must update SDSs when significant new information becomes available. Employees must continue to have access to SDSs. Employers must ensure that updated SDSs are obtained and readily available for all hazardous products used, handled or stored in the workplace.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION – TRADE SECRETS

Trade secret rules continue to apply.

For more information, visit our website to review the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* – Sections 324, 325, 326, and 335.

Adapted with permission from WorkSafeNB. Adapted from the WHMIS after GHS Fact Sheets developed by CCOHS in collaboration with Health Canada.

¹ See the *Pictograms factsheet* (wsccl.nt.ca/wsccl.nu.ca).

² See the *Hazard Classes factsheet* (ccohs.ca).

³ See the *Supplier and Workplace Labels factsheet* (wsccl.nt.ca/wsccl.nu.ca).

⁴ See the *Safety Data Sheets factsheet* (ccohs.ca).