



## TOPIC: Chemicals in Your Workplace

**Background:** OSHA's Hazard Communications Standard (HCS) was initially developed in 1992 as a mechanism for identifying and controlling chemical hazards in the workplace while communicating this information to employees. The HCS requires employers to inform employees (training and labeling), inventory chemicals, control hazards and maintain product safety information. Employers accomplish these elements by implementing a Hazard Communications Program.

*Note that not all chemicals are covered under the HCS. Exempted products include those that are used in a manner consistent with household use (for example, Windex, ink-correction fluid, or dust cleaners for electronic equipment).*

**Upcoming Changes:** OSHA has incorporated the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) into the HCS to align the requirements with the United Nation's streamlined system. Major changes involved with the GHS alignment include:

- Labeling, including the use of new pictograms (see right)
- Classification of chemical hazards
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

SDS will be a standardized 16-section format that replaces the less formatted MSDS system. Manufacturers will have until June 2015 to develop new SDS.

**What the University Has Done:** The University has previously implemented a Hazard Communications Program that is periodically reviewed and updated as required. The Health and Safety Office has been working with various departments on campus to identify, evaluate and control chemical hazards in the workplace, and provide training to affected employees.

Additionally, the University is currently investigating a new Online system for managing chemical inventories and SDS to supplement paper copies.

**What Employees can Do:**

- Review SDS and labels for products in their workplace
- Report any concerns to Health and Safety
- Work with chemicals in a manner consistent with training

### New Pictograms for Hazardous Chemicals

<p><b>Health Hazard</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Carcinogen</li> <li>▪ Mutagen</li> <li>▪ Toxin</li> <li>▪ Respiratory Sensitizer</li> </ul>	<p><b>Flame</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flammable</li> <li>▪ Pyrophoric</li> <li>▪ Self-Heating</li> <li>▪ Self-Reacting</li> <li>▪ Flammable Gas</li> <li>▪ Org. Peroxide</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cylinder</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gas under pressure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Corrosion</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Skin Corrosion</li> <li>▪ Burns</li> <li>▪ Eye Damage</li> <li>▪ Corrosive to metals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Flame over Circle</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oxidizer</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bomb</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explosives</li> <li>▪ Self-Reacting</li> <li>▪ Org. Peroxide</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skull &amp; Crossbones</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exclamation</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Irritant</li> <li>▪ Skin sensitizer</li> <li>▪ Narcotic effect</li> <li>▪ Respirator irritant</li> </ul>	<p><b>Environment</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquatic toxin</li> </ul>

**For More Information:** OSHA: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)  
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