

Industry uses thousands of chemicals and chemical compounds in manufacturing and processing operations. Some of these chemicals and compounds can be hazardous. For the health and safety of District employees, it is important for them to know about the hazardous substances used in the work area and to be trained to safely handle those substances.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard is designed to help keep employees healthy and safe by informing them of safe and appropriate methods of working with the hazardous substances in the work place.

The OSHA Hazard Communication Standard has (5) five requirements, and every hazardous or potentially hazardous substance found in various work areas are subject to all five (5) requirements. They are:

#### 1. HAZARD EVALUATIONS

Any company which produces or imports a chemical or compound must conduct a hazard evaluation of the substance to determine its potential health or physical hazard.

The hazard evaluation consists of an investigation of all the available scientific evidence about the substance. From the hazard evaluation, a substance may be classified as a health hazard, or a physical hazard. These classifications are then further broken down according to type.

##### HEALTH HAZARDS

Carcinogens  
Irritants  
Sensitizers  
Corrosives  
Toxic substances  
Highly toxic substances  
Substances harmful to specific organs or parts of the body

##### PHYSICAL HAZARDS

Combustible liquids  
Compressed gases  
Explosives  
Flammable  
Organic peroxides  
Unstable substances  
Water-reactive substances

#### 2. WARNING LABELS

If a chemical is hazardous or potentially hazardous, the producer or importer must affix a warning label to every container of that chemical before it leaves their facility. The label must identify the chemical, state the hazards, and give the name and address of the producer or importer.

If the hazardous substances are transferred to another container, that container must then be labeled, tagged, or marked with the name of the chemical and the appropriate hazard warning.

Warning labels should be replaced immediately if they are defaced or removed.

### 3. MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS

The producer or importer must also supply a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each hazardous substance. MSDS's must be kept available in the work area where the substance is used, so that the people using the substance can easily review important safety and health information, such as:

- A. The hazard possible from misuse of the substance;
- B. Precautions necessary for use, handling, and storage;
- C. Emergency procedures for leaks, spills, fire, and first aid; and/or
- D. Useful facts about the substance's physical or chemical properties.

### 4. WORK AREA SPECIFIC TRAINING

Because a hazardous substance may react differently depending on how it is used or the environment of the work area, the District will provide work-area specific training which takes the District's operations, environment, and work policies into consideration. In work-area specific training the employee should learn:

- A. What hazardous substances are present where the employee works and the hazards they pose;
- B. Ways for the employee to protect themselves against those hazards, such as protective equipment, emergency procedures, and safe handling;
- C. Where the MSDS's are kept and an explanation of the labeling system; and
- D. Where the St. Maries Joint School District No. 41's written Hazard Communication Program is located.

### 5. THE WRITTEN HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

OSHA requires companies to prepare a written Hazard Communication Program.

This document states how the District plans to ensure that hazardous materials are appropriately labeled, how and where MSDS's will be maintained, and how employees will be provided with specific information and training.

A significant part of preventing potentially hazardous substances from turning into actual hazards is with the employee.

The employee must be alert to warning labels, safety placards, and caution signs. The District's safe work practices and safe procedures for handling hazardous substances must be followed. If the employee has any questions about the program or possible work place hazards, the employee should contact his or her supervisor.

**Policy Cross Reference:**

**Legal Reference:**

**Policy History:**

Adopted:	08/10/1987
Reviewed:	12/03/2008