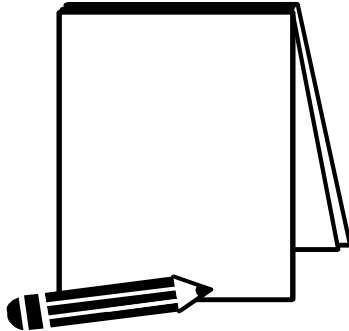




Your Right To Know "Material Safety Data Sheets"





*OSHA's Hazardous Communication Standard is generically referred to as the **Workers' Right-to-Know Law**. It simply means that every worker has the "right to know" the type and quantity of hazardous substances that are on his jobsite.*


 **OSHA's Hazardous Communication Standard** (Right-to-Know Law) stipulates that all manufacturers must provide the end user with a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).


 **A MSDS contains** an enormous amount of data about the hazards associated with the product being described in the MSDS sheet. It covers such things as (a) hazardous ingredients, (b) physical/chemical characteristics, (c) fire and explosion hazard data, (d) reactivity, (e) name and address of the company that made the chemical, (f) specific hazard warnings such as physical or health hazards, and (g) first-aid treatment for those exposed to the chemical.

 **Much of the data shown** on the MSDS sheet is also outlined on the label affixed to the container (i.e. tube, can, carton, jar, drum, etc.). In almost every case, the name and address of the chemical manufacturer includes an 800 number where the manufacturer can be reached (day or night) should an emergency arise.

 **A typical jobsite** might have one-hundred or more toxic chemicals on site, meaning that the foreman must also have an MSDS sheet for each of the 100-or-more chemicals, and the list must be alphabetized so that the jobsite foreman can easily find the correct MSDS sheet for the corresponding container.

 **Of all the data** that is shown on the MSDS sheet, the section entitled **First-Aid Treatment** is the most important to all workers. This section tells the first-aid giver (or the emergency rescue squad personnel) how to go about treating the worker that has accidentally been exposed to one or more caustic agents (chemicals).

 **It clearly outlines** the steps to be taken, the remedies recommended, types of first-aid to be administered, a number of "do's" and "don'ts" and what symptoms to look for on the exposed/injured worker (such as inflammation of skin areas, swelling, bleeding, blistering, nausea, dizziness, unconsciousness, burns, etc.).

 **The three-ring binder** containing your company's MSDS binder must be accessible to all workers, and is typically kept in the jobsite work trailer...or the foreman's vehicle. Each worker should know the whereabouts of this MSDS binder, and should ask their supervisor if they don't. The data contained in these MSDS sheets can, in many cases, mean the difference between life and death.

As a key part of your company's **Right-to-Know** program, you will be trained to know and recognize those toxic substances that are on your jobsite, in your storage shed, in company vehicles, and maybe even in your tool box. What are some of the more common toxic substances that are all around you on your jobsite?

- Gasoline
- Battery Acid
- Cement
- Pesticides
- Rust Inhibitor
- Kerosene
- Mastics
- Glues
- PCBs
- Lead Paints
- Greases
- Aerosol Sprays
- Chlorine
- Chlorine

As part of your safety training, you will be reminded of the volatility (explosive nature) of many of the chemicals on your jobsite. But just knowing that something can BLOW UP is not the purpose of training. What we all need to learn is how to handle potentially explosive products (gasoline, kerosene, solvents, thinners, etc.) so that we don't suffer a major injury.

Training associated with your company's HazCom program is important to your general safety, health and welfare. You can do your part by becoming familiar with the contents of your company's MSDS sheets. It is your life.