

KELLER'S 5-MINUTE WORKPLACE SAFETY TALKS



Hazard Communication—An Overview

Overview Of Topic

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is based upon the concept that employees have both a need and a right to know the chemical hazards they may be exposed to in their work areas, and how they can protect themselves from those hazards.

The HCS is designed to help you provide your employees with this information so that employees can take steps to reduce exposures and establish proper work practices.

The Written HCS Program

Employers who use hazardous chemicals must have a program to ensure the information is provided to exposed employees. This includes any situation where employees may be exposed to the chemical under normal conditions or in a foreseeable emergency.

Examples of "use" include packaging, handling, transferring, or reacting a chemical.

Employees must have access to the employer's written hazard communication program, a list of hazardous chemicals present in the workplace, and to MSDSs.

Training Elements

The hazcom training program must contain the following elements:

- an explanation of the standard's requirements;
- a description of the operations where hazardous chemicals are present;
- the location of written programs, chemical lists, and MSDSs;
- methods used to detect the presence or release of hazardous chemicals;
- the physical and health hazards of chemicals in employee work areas;

KELLER'S 5-MINUTE WORKPLACE SAFETY TALKS

- measures employees can take to protect themselves from the hazards, including work practices, emergency procedures, and PPE; and
- details of your written hazcom program, including an explanation of labels and MSDSs.

There are generally two types of chemical hazards: physical hazards and health hazards. A chemical can have both physical and health hazards.

Chemicals that present physical hazards can include flammable liquids or solids, combustible liquids or solids, compressed gases, explosives, organic peroxides, oxidizers, pyrophoric materials, unstable materials, and water-reactive materials.

The types of health hazards include: irritants, corrosives, toxic agents, sensitizers, carcinogens, reproductive toxins, and organ-specific agents. Health hazards can be acute (immediate or short-term) or chronic (long-term), and a chemical can have both acute and chronic health hazards.

In the workplace, each container must be labeled, tagged, or marked with the identity of the hazardous chemical and the appropriate hazard warning. The only exception is “portable containers” used to transport hazardous chemicals when the chemical is used only by the employee who performs the transfer on that work shift.

Review 29 CFR 1910.1200.

Using the employee handout, review the requirements of §1910.1200. Show samples of the workplace hazard labeling system used. Use a sample MSDS to explain what information is available on the MSDS and where employees can find MSDSs in their work areas.

Tell employees which jobs involved hazardous chemicals.

Take a tour of the workplace to show employees where they can access a copy of the written hazcom program and MSDSs.

Where To Go For More Information

29 CFR 1910.1200-Chemical Hazard communication.

Sample MSDS and workplace container labels used in your workplace.

Your company's written hazard communication program.

Training Tips

KELLER'S 5-MINUTE WORKPLACE SAFETY TALKS

Hazard Communication—An Overview

Overview

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is based upon the concept that employees have both a need and a right to know the chemical hazards they may be exposed to in their work areas, and how they can protect themselves from those hazards.

What must the employer do?

Employers must:

- Keep a list of hazardous chemicals in the workplace,
- Prepare and follow a written hazcom program,
- Make sure all chemical containers are properly labeled,
- Make sure material safety data sheets (MSDSs) are available to employees, and
- Provide training to employees.



What are chemical hazards?

There are two general types of chemical hazards:

- Physical hazards, such as flammable or combustible materials, compressed gases, explosives, organic peroxides, oxidizers, pyrophoric materials, unstable materials, and water-reactive materials; and
- Health hazards, such as irritants, corrosives, toxins, sensitizers, carcinogens, reproductive toxins, and organ-specific agents. Health hazards can be immediate or short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic).

What must be on a label?

In-plant hazcom labels must include:

- the identity of the material in the container, and
- appropriate hazard warnings, which can be words, pictures, symbols, or a combination.

KELLER'S 5-MINUTE WORKPLACE SAFETY TALKS



Hazard Communication—An Overview— Sign-Off Sheet

This sign-off sheet documents the employees at this company, _____, who have taken part in a training session on Hazard Communication—An Overview. The session covered:

- Operations at this facility which expose employees hazardous chemicals.
- OSHA's hazcom training requirements.
- Where employees can find a copy of the written hazcom plan.
- Hazcom labeling requirements.

The space below is for employees to “sign off” that they were in attendance.

Date of Training: _____

Facility: _____

Employee Signature

Print Name Here

Supervisor's Signature