

Section 9

Department Chemical Inventory

And

Material Safety Data Sheets

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User's Guide to Material Safety Data Sheets

Manufacturers are required to provide Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) to summarize the health and safety information about their products. In many cases, manufacturers automatically send a MSDS whenever a hazardous substance is ordered.

Your department is required to keep MSDSs readily available at all times for the hazardous material used in your workplace, including research laboratories. A central file of MSDSs for the University is maintained at the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

To Obtain MSDSs

Ask your supervisor or department head where your MSDS files are kept. If the department does not have the particular MSDS you are looking for, ask your supervisor or department head to secure one from the manufacturer.

Using MSDSs

Below is a very brief summary of the information that Labor and Industries requires to be on a MSDS. For assistance with interpreting and applying this information to your work situation, consult with your supervisor. It is your supervisor's responsibility to be certain that you understand the information as it applies to your work. The following headings are similar to those required on the MSDS, but the arrangement of the various sections might vary somewhat.

Identity

The product name on the MSDS is the same as that shown on the container label of the substance, whether trade name or generic chemical name. This section should also contain the manufacturer's name, address, emergency telephone number, the preparation date, and revision date if any. The section might also include synonyms, the chemical group, and the Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) number of the material.

Hazardous Ingredients

The chemical and common names of each hazardous component that makes up at least 1% of the product must be listed, except that any component being a carcinogen must be listed if it is at least 0.1% of the mixture. This section also includes threshold limit values, permissible exposure limits and other such information. These may not be proven safe levels of exposure. If the exposure limit is not listed, do not assume that the chemical is safe. Check with your supervisor or the Office of Environmental Health and Safety for further information.

Physical/Chemical Characteristics

This section of the MSDS provides the general characteristics of the product, such as vapor pressure, vapor density, appearance, odor, and other general characteristics. Consider these properties as well as how you work with a hazardous material to evaluate the risks, which vary greatly depending on how a material is used.

Fire and Explosion Hazard Data

This section includes flash point and flammability limits. The flash point means the minimum temperature at which a liquid gives off vapors within a test vessel in sufficient concentration to form an ignitable mixture with air. The lower the flash point, the greater the risk of fire or explosion.

The flammability limits are the concentrations below or above which ignition will not occur, where the mixture is too "lean" or too "rich" to ignite. This section may also include information on the proper extinguishing agent(s) to use in extinguishing a fire and recommendations on fire fighting.

Reactivity Data

Reactivity in this context is the tendency for a material to chemically change or break down and to become more dangerous. This information should include a list of incompatible materials to avoid and conditions to avoid, such as light and heat.

Health Hazard Data

This section includes the health hazards of the material, its short term (acute) and long term (chronic) effects, routes of entry into the body, and symptoms. It states whether or not the chemical is listed as a carcinogen or potential carcinogen. It should list medical conditions generally aggravated by exposure and the emergency first-aid procedures to follow in case of exposure.

If you need health hazard information that is not on an MSDS or if you are concerned that you may have been exposed to a hazardous material, contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety for information and advice.

Precautions for Safe Handling and Use

This section provides brief information on handling a leak or spill. In any case of a leak or spill, notify the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. In addition to the recommendations on the MSDS, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety can advise you on specific procedures and provide protective equipment.

The person who creates a spill is responsible for the cleanup, although some spills may require assistance of trained personnel. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety will give advice and in some cases supply cleanup materials.

Control Measures

In addition to the recommendations on the MSDS, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety can answer specific questions regarding ventilation and personal protective equipment for normal working conditions and emergencies. Suitable control measures are based on how a material is used.

**Chemical Inventory
And
Material Safety Data Sheets**

This section is for the department's required chemical inventory and material safety data sheets.

Place the department chemical inventory behind this page. Update it annually.

A copy of a Material Safety Data Sheet for each hazardous material used or stored in the department or specific area covered by this desk book is to be available within the department when departmental personnel are working.

Place a Material Safety Data Sheet for each chemical in the inventory behind the departmental inventory.

If the number of MSDSs makes it impractical to put them in the desk book, indicate below the exact location where the MSDSs are kept.

Location(s) of MSDSs within the department:
