



routine tasks (tasks done infrequently and not part of the workers' normal tasks) should be developed and implemented. Employees have a responsibility to follow safe work practices.

### **Employee Training**

By law, you have the right to learn about chemicals you work with and how to protect yourself against their dangers. Before you work with any chemical, you should know:

- The requirements of the standard;
- The location of the HCP and MSDSs;
- How to read chemical container labels and MSDSs;
- The identity and location of work process involving chemicals;
- The physical and health hazards, including the symptoms of overexposure to the chemical;
- How to safely use the chemical and appropriate protective equipment;
- How to detect the presence or release of the chemical; and
- What to do in an emergency, such as an injury or an accidental chemical spill.

The hazard communication standard is the law. If you feel that the rules are not being followed, stop what you are doing and contact your supervisor or EH&S. You do not have to give your name, and all reports will be kept confidential. Never let anyone pressure you to per-

form duties you feel are unsafe or intimidate you into not reporting your concerns.

### **Getting Assistance**

EH&S provides consultation and assistance in developing and implementing written programs, conducting chemical inventories, obtaining MSDSs and presenting training. Every department must maintain a copy of the MSDS for each chemical product employees may be exposed to in the course of their work. MSDSs can be obtained by contacting EH&S or completing the MSDS request form in the Safety Policies and Procedures Manual (SPPM S80.62.4).



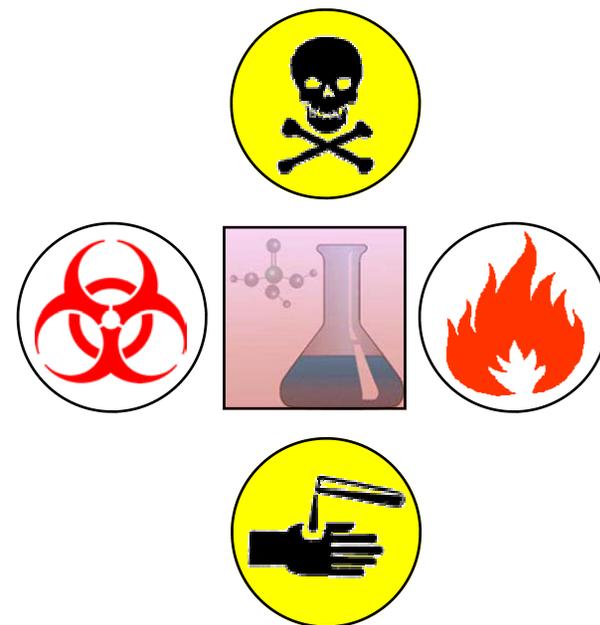
### **Environmental Health & Safety**

P.O. Box 641172  
Pullman, WA 99164-1172  
(509) 335-3041

Wenatchee.....509-663-8181  
TriCities.....509-372-7163  
Vancouver.....360-546-9706  
Spokane.....509-358-7500

<http://www.ehs.wsu.edu>

## Chemical Hazard Communication:



## Your Right to Know

### ***Chemicals in the Workplace***

Chemical usage is common in most WSU departments, and many of the chemical products in use have ingredients that are associated with a broad range of possible hazardous effects. Some are capable of causing temporary, mild health effects, such as irritation, while others are capable of causing serious injuries or illnesses (including death) as a result of their toxicity or flammability. Some common chemical products used at WSU are paints, pesticides, cleaners and adhesives. Regardless of where these types of products are used, they are classified as "hazardous" chemicals.

### ***Hazard Communication Standard***

The Hazard Communication Standard is based on the simple idea that employees have both the need and the "right to know" the identities and hazards of the chemicals they are potentially exposed to at work, as well as safe work practices and protective measures to minimize exposure and avoid chemical-related injuries and illnesses. The standard requires that you be told the following things about hazardous chemicals in your work area:

- What chemicals are used, when they are used, and where they are stored.
- How they might harm you.
- How to tell when chemicals have been spilled or released and what to do in case of an emergency.

- Where to find written information about the chemicals and about your employer's program for protecting you from exposure.
- How to safely use hazardous chemicals and appropriate protective equipment as part of your job.

### ***Written Program***

Each department using or storing chemicals (except laboratories with an established Laboratory Safety Manual) needs to establish a written Hazard Communication Program (HCP) which describes how employees will be informed about potential chemical hazards and the equipment and work practices necessary to get the job done safely.

EH&S has developed a template for developing a HCP and is available by contacting the EH&S office.

### ***Chemical Container Labeling***

Every chemical container is required to be labeled by the manufacturer or supplier. The label provides general information on the potential hazards and how to use the product safely. The label is required at a minimum to have the: name of the product, name and address of the manufacturer, and the physical and health hazards associated with the product.

However, the label only provides limited information. For more information

about a chemical and its hazards, employees should refer to the material safety data sheet (MSDS).

### ***Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)***

Prepared by the chemical manufacturer or supplier, MSDSs provide detailed safety and health information not found on container labels. An MSDS can be in any format, but it must contain the following information:

- The name of the chemical and its hazardous ingredients
- Name, address and phone number for hazard and emergency information.
- What it looks like and how it reacts to temperature and other chemicals.
- How the chemical can enter your body, how much you can be exposed to safely, and ways to protect yourself from being exposed.
- Emergency and first aid procedures.

### ***Safe Work Practices***

Safe work practices for handling chemicals and engineering controls (e.g., ventilation) should be implemented based on information from MSDSs and container labels. Supervisors are responsible for establishing protective practices for employees who may contact hazardous chemicals.

In addition to establishing safe work practices for routine chemical use, procedures for chemical use during non-