

SDS Sources: Hazard Communication FAQ

[What is the Hazard Communications Standard?](#)

[What is a Material Safety Data Sheet \(\(M\)SDS\)?](#)

[Do I need to use an \(M\)SDS?](#)

[Which chemicals require an \(M\)SDS?](#)

[Which substances do not require an \(M\)SDS?](#)

[Do pharmaceuticals require an \(M\)SDS?](#)

[What should I do with \(M\)SDS hard copies from a chemical manufacturer?](#)

[What are my \(M\)SDS responsibilities?](#)

[What are my labeling requirements?](#)

[What is a list of hazardous chemicals?](#)

[How do I find an \(M\)SDS?](#)

What is the Hazard Communications Standard?

The [Hazard Communication Standard](#) requires employers to establish hazard communication programs to transmit information on the hazards of chemicals to their employees by means of labels on containers, material safety data sheets, and training programs. Implementation of these hazard communication programs will ensure that all employees have the "right-to-know" the hazards and identities of the chemicals they work with, and will reduce the incidence of chemically - related occupational illnesses and injuries. This policy is enforced by OSHA, the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#).

What is a Material Safety Data Sheet ((M)SDS)?

An (M)SDS is a written document produced by the chemical manufacturer or importer that includes important information about a chemical including:

- The chemical identity
- Physical and chemical characteristics
- Physical and health hazards
- Medical conditions which are aggravated by exposure to the chemical
- The primary route(s) of entry into the body
- Relevant exposure limits
- Whether the hazardous chemical is listed in the [Annual Report on Carcinogens](#) by the [National Toxicology Program \(NTP\)](#).
- Precautions for safe handling
- Procedures for clean-up of spills
- Control measures
- Emergency and first aid procedures

- Date of preparation/update of the (M)SDS
- Name, address and telephone number of the chemical manufacturer

For a detailed description of (M)SDS's view the [Hazard Communication Standard](#) - 1910.1200.

Note: *The OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) was revised in 2012 to adopt the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). One of the major changes is the renaming/reformatting of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to Safety Data Sheets (SDS). During the transition period you will see both usages on the FRCC website.*

Do I need to use an (M)SDS?

(M)SDS's are useful documents and should be used as reference for any questions that you may have concerning a chemical that is used in your workplace. FRCC is required to provide access to (M)SDS's for hazardous chemicals that employees use while at work.

Which chemicals require an (M)SDS?

Every hazardous chemical that is in use in the workplace requires an (M)SDS. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration defines a hazardous chemical as "any chemical which is a health hazard or a physical hazard." Some materials do not require an (M)SDS.

Which substances do not require an (M)SDS?

(M)SDS's are not required for any of the following items or chemicals:

- Chemicals that are not considered by OSHA to be "hazardous". (Note: you will never get in trouble for having an (M)SDS you don't need, so it is always better to be safe than sorry.)
- "Articles" such as a carpet or chair.
- Hazardous waste as defined by the [Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1976](#) (a.k.a., RCRA, Title II, Subpart D).
- Hazardous substances defined in the [Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act](#). (CERCLA).
- Pesticides defined in the [Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act](#) (FIFRA).
- Laboratory chemicals defined in [Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals in Laboratories](#). (Note: if you work in a laboratory and receive an (M)SDS when a chemical is shipped to you, you are required to retain the (M)SDS and make it available to employees.)
- Food and alcoholic beverages
- Tobacco or tobacco products
- Wood or wood products
- Cosmetics
- Nuisance particulates that do not pose any physical or health hazard
- Ionizing and non-ionizing radiation
- Biological hazards
- Drugs in solid, final form for direct administration to the patient. (For example, tablets, pills, and capsules.)
- Drugs which are packaged by the chemical manufacturer for sale to consumers in retail establishments or those for personal consumption such as included in first aid cabinets.

Do pharmaceuticals require an (M)SDS?

(M)SDS are required for all drugs defined under the Federal [Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act](#) except for drugs in solid, final form for direct administration to the patient (i.e., tablets, pills, capsules).

What should I do with (M)SDS hard copies from a chemical manufacturer?

Whenever you order a new chemical the chemical distributor has the responsibility to provide you with a Materials Safety Data Sheet. Keep the original copy of this document for your department's (M)SDS collection.

What are my (M)SDS responsibilities?

Departments shall:

- Develop and maintain an up-to-date inventory of all chemical products used in departmental work areas.
- Maintain Material Safety Data Sheets for all hazardous chemicals listed on the inventory.
- Ensure that (M)SDS's are readily accessible to employees during all hours that employees work in the area.
- Prepare (M)SDS's for chemical products formulated or manufactured by their department.

Supervisors shall:

- Conduct site-specific on-the-job training for chemical substances used in their workplaces. Supervisors must train employees before they begin work with any new chemical: at orientation and when new chemicals are introduced into the work area.
- Review the hazard information on all new chemical products brought into the workplace.
- Request additional information from OESO as necessary.

Chemical Hygiene Committee shall:

- Training should be done through GreenLight and the committee could review the attendee list to ensure that everyone has completed training.
- Maintain a master archive of (M)SDS's for distribution to users.
- Assist departments in the preparation of (M)SDS's.

Contractors who bring hazardous chemicals onto FRCC property shall:

- Make the Hazard Communication Program available for review at the work site.
- Maintain an up-to-date hazardous chemical inventory, and all corresponding (M)SDS's.
- Be aware of all information contained in the Contractor Safety Guidebook.

What are my labeling requirements?

- OSHA requires that the label include the identity, name and address of the manufacturer or distributor, and appropriate hazard warnings.
- The identity is any term that appears on the label, the (M)SDS, and the list of hazardous chemicals, and thus links these three sources of information. The identity used by the supplier may be a common or trade name ("Black Magic Formula"), or a chemical name (1,1,1-trichloroethane).
- The hazard warning is a brief statement of the hazardous effects of the chemical ("flammable," "causes lung damage"). Labels frequently contain other information, such as precautionary

measures ("do not use near open flame"), but this information is provided voluntarily and is not required by the rule.

- Labels must be legible, with required information appearing in English and other languages understood by employees. Labels should be prominently displayed on the container. There are no specific requirements for size or color, or any specified text.
- If employees transfer chemicals into a secondary container, this container must also be labeled as indicated above with the following exceptions:
- If the employee who transfers the chemical into the secondary container will use ALL of it during that work shift and before leaving the work area, the container does not have to be labeled.
- If the container will not leave the work area, the label is required to have the identity and hazard warning but does not need the manufacturer's name and address.

What is a list of hazardous chemicals?

As part of the Written Hazard Communication Program, OSHA requires employers to maintain a list of the hazardous chemicals known to be present. You should use the identity that is referenced on the appropriate material safety data sheet. The list may be compiled for the workplace as a whole or for individual work areas.

How do I find an (M)SDS?

- Determine the manufacturer of the substance that you are using.
- If the manufacturer's name is not displayed then search through the additional sources list of (M)SDSs.
- Follow the web site search links to retrieve the (M)SDS that you require.