

LOSS CONTROL

and you

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OSHA's Revised Hazard Communication Program

By: **Mike Huss**
Loss Control Supervisor

OSHA has enhanced its Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) 29 CFR 1910.1200 to align with the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). GHS is primarily concerned with the classification of hazardous chemicals and the communication of hazards related to those chemicals to users of the products via warning labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Currently over 65 countries have or are in the process of adopting GHS. OSHA is calling the revised standard "HazCom 2012" and it went into effect in the U.S. May 25, 2012 affecting over 5 million employers and 40 million workers. Two significant changes contained in the revised standard require the use of new labeling elements and a standardized format for SDSs, formerly known as, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs).

GHS Compliance Deadlines

The first deadline is **December 1, 2013**. By this date, employers must train employees on GHS (how to read and understand new labels and SDSs), manage the influx of new SDS's which will include replacing their entire MSDS library, and be ready to produce GHS compliant workplace labels. To prepare, employers should begin educating themselves on the changes as they will want to train employees well before the December 1, 2013 deadline. Existing fines and penalties for non-compliance with the HCS will extend to the new GHS alignment. This means that HCS violations, which already rank #3 on OSHA's Top Ten Violations List, could see even more action.

The next compliance deadline is **June 1, 2015**, the date by which chemical manufacturers and distributors must reclassify their chemicals according to GHS guidelines and produce GHS formatted safety data sheets and labels.

The final deadline is **June 16, 2016**, the date by which employers must be fully compliant with GHS. This means all training of employees on any new hazards that have been iden-

tified in the reclassifying of chemicals by the manufacturers and distributors. It also means workplace labeling and workplace hazard programs must be up-to-date.

Labels and SDSs

By **December 1, 2013**, according to OSHA, employers must train their workers on the following:

I. Label Elements

A. Training must include specific information the employee would expect to see on the new labels including:

Product Identifier— which explains how the hazardous chemical is identified, i.e., chemical name, code or batch number. This identifier must be on the label and in Section 1 of the SDSs.



Signal Word - indicates the level of hazard severity and alerts the reader to a potential hazard on the label. There are only two signal words, "**Danger**" for more severe hazards, and "**Warning**" for less severe hazards.

Pictogram - must be in the shape of a square set on a point, (i.e. a red diamond) and include a black hazard symbol on a white background with a red frame wide enough to be clearly visible. OSHA has designated eight different pictograms, the exception being the environmental pictogram, as environmental hazards are not within OSHA's jurisdiction.

Hazard Statement(s) - describe the nature of

the hazard(s) of a chemical and, where appropriate, the degree of hazard (i.e., "causes damage to kidneys through prolonged or repeated exposure"). All hazard statements must appear on the label.

Precautionary Statement(s) - a phrase that describes recommended measures to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure or improper storage and handling.

Name, address, and phone number - of the chemical manufacturer, distributor or importer.

B. How an employee might use the labels in the workplace. For example: When a chemical has multiple hazards, different pictograms are used to identify the various hazards.

When there are similar precautionary statements, the one providing the most protective information will be included on the label.

II. SDS Format

A. Training on the format of the SDS must include information on:

- Standardized 16-section format, including the type of information found in the various sections. For example, Section 8 (Exposure Controls/Personal Protection) will always contain information about exposure limits, engineering controls and ways to protect yourself, including use of personal protective equipment
- How the information on the label is related to SDS. For example, the precautionary statements would be the same on the label and on the SDS.

Ultimately, employers have a responsibility to keep their employees safe. For that reason, and to ensure full compliance, FirstComp recommends companies stay in front of GHS adoption by aligning their policies and health and safety management with GHS principles at the earliest opportunity. For assistance with this or any other type of safety and health program, please contact us at (888) 500-3344 or losscontrol@firstcomp.com

Safety & Health Calendar

August 2013

[National Immunization Awareness Month](#)

September 2013

[National Preparedness Month](#)

October 2013

[Eye Injury Prevention Month](#)

Safety News

By: **Kim Coonrod**
Loss Control Manager

OSHA Heat-Safety App

This app combines heat index data from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with the user's location to determine necessary protective measures. Based on the risk level of the heat index, the app provides users with information about precautions they may take, such as; drinking fluids, taking rest breaks and adjusting work operations. Users also can review the signs and symptoms of heat stroke, heat exhaustion and other heat-related illnesses, and learn about first aid steps to take in an emergency. Information for supervisors is also available through the app on how to train employees on heat illness signs and symptoms. [Heat Safety Tool](#)

NIOSH Announces New Ladder Safety App, Free for iPhone or Android

NIOSH has developed a new mobile phone application on ladder safety, which is available for free download on both iPhone and Android devices. The app provides easy access to graphic aids, safety checklists, and reference information to assist ladder users in making safe choices and features an indicator using visual and sound signals for positioning extension ladders at an optimal angle. The app features a multimodal indicator and a graphic-oriented guide for ladder selection, inspection, positioning, accessorizing, and safe use. For more information or to download this new app, visit the NIOSH website. [NIOSH Ladder Safety App](#)



The Hazards of Hands-Free

Think talking on the phone or sending emails or text messages with hands-free gadgets is safe? Not really, according to the AAA Foundation for Safety. In a new study, researchers tracked the head and eye movements of thirty-eight drivers. The researchers also measured the drivers' brain activity – and level of their distraction – during various activities. Category 1, which indicated minimal risk, included listening to the radio; category 2, moderate risk, involved talking on the phone, hands-free or not; category 3, extensive risk, featured listening or responding to emails via voice-activation technology.

Some voice commands like turning the heater or wipers on are relatively less distracting and "less cognitively demanding," said David Strayer, a psychology professor from the University of Utah who led the study. Checking Facebook, writing emails and reading text messages, however, demand more focus and concentration and can overload attention spans. More than 70 percent of Americans think that going hands-free is safe according to the AAA. This study reminds the public of the hazards of hands-free, especially when in-vehicle technologies like infotainment systems and smart phones are becoming more common. There are about 9 million infotainment-equipped vehicles on the road, and the number will rise to more than 60 million in five years. The AAA intends to share its findings with automobile makers and consumer electronics manufacturers.

Lessons from Losses

By: **Courtney Rosengartner**
Loss Control Technician

An excavation worker was injured when he stepped out of a trench box and the wall collapsed burying him from the neck down. The trench was 20 feet long, 3 feet wide and 10 feet deep. Fortunately, his co-workers noticed the cave-in and were able to dig him out in about one minute. A life support helicopter transported him to the hospital where he stayed for two weeks undergoing surgery for multiple fractures, a broken vertebra and a dislocated shoulder. He had two steel rods and several screws surgically inserted. He missed seven months of work ambulating by use of a cane and wearing a lumbar brace. The total cost of this claim was almost \$300,000.

The trench box was OSHA approved and the employee knew he was not to step out of it, yet he did and is lucky to be alive. Protective systems are always required at depths greater than 5 feet and should be inspected daily by a competent individual, or more often if conditions change.

For more information, please see the [OSHA Quick Card on Trench Safety](#).

Class Focus: Grading, Trenching & Excavation



[A Guide to the OSHA Excavations Standard](#)

[Best Practices for Excavation – OH Bureau](#)

[Hazard Correction – Grading & Excavation](#)

[Excavations – OSHA](#)

[Excavations – Outreach Program – OSHA](#)

[Excavation Safety – TX Department of Ins.](#)

[Excavation Safety Guide & Directory](#)

[Excavations – Safe Practices for Small Business](#)

[Preventing Heat Illness in Outdoor Workers](#)

[Safety Manual for Excavation – OH Bureau](#)

[Soil Classification and Excavation Safety](#)

[Tailgate Safety Talks – Excavation](#)

[The Importance of Safety Training](#)

[Trenching and Excavation: Safety Principles](#)

[Trench Safety: Adapting to Conditions](#)

[Excavation and Safety Program – Worker's Manual](#)

Are you interested in adding Safety and Health content to your Web-site? Why not add a link to the FirstComp website? For information please contact us at:

losscontrol@firstcomp.com

For information about any of FirstComp's Loss Control Services, please call (888) 500-3344 or email losscontrol@firstcomp.com.