HEALTH AND SAFETY

THE CUPE WHMIS CHECKLIST

Introduction

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is Canada's national hazard information and communication standard. It ensures consistency in how information about harmful materials is provided to workers.

WHMIS became law through a combination of federal, provincial, and territorial legislation and came into force on October 31, 1988.

Transition of WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015

In February 2015, WHMIS was modified to comply with the Globally Harmonized System for Classifications Labels (GHS). GHS applies a global system of classifying and labelling chemicals and communicating their hazards. This updated version of WHMIS is called WHMIS 2015.

Summary of changes:

- "Controlled products" are now referred to as "hazardous products."
- Hazardous materials are now divided into **three groups (physical, health, and environmental hazards)**. NOTE: The **environmental hazard** group may be listed on a safety data sheet and product label. However, this group is an optional WHMIS requirement for workplaces in Canada.
- Each hazard group includes several **classes** (19 classes in the physical hazards group and 12 classes in the health hazard group). Each class contains **categories** and can include **subcategories**.
- **Product labels** (also called supplier labels) include new pictograms for hazard classes, prescribed hazard statements, and signal words (words that alert workers about the degree or level of hazard).

- **Safety data sheets (SDS)** now have 16 sections with required information.
- Employers no longer have to update a SDS every three years. An updated SDS is now only required when new information about a product becomes available.

A three-year transition period (which ended December 1, 2018) was adopted to allow manufacturers, importers, distributors, and suppliers of workplace hazardous materials to change the classification and labelling of products. By the end of this three-year period, employers were required to remove products with WHMIS 1988 labels and safety data sheets. As such, there should be no products in the workplace with WHMIS 1988 labels and safety data sheets.

Worker education

The program for worker education has not changed. Employers are still required to ensure that workers are instructed and trained with:

- the safe handling, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous products and materials;
- the purpose and significance of information contained on a product label, workplace label, and safety data sheet;
- procedures to follow in case of an accidental spill or emergency.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) has developed a training module that explains the roles and responsibilities of suppliers, employers, and workers under WHMIS. The module also provides information about labels, safety data sheets, and the different hazards classes. In addition, workers need job-specific information and training to satisfy worker education requirements under occupational health and safety legislation.

See: **CCOHS:** WHMIS 2015 for Workers

CUPE has created a checklist to identify WHMIS best practices and to ensure compliance with occupational health and safety legislation. The checklist can be used by the union, joint health and safety committees (JHSC), and health and safety representatives (HSR).

The information in the checklist does not constitute legal advice, nor does it replace occupational health and safety legislation. If there is any dispute about statutory compliance, please refer to the federal, provincial, or territorial legislation applicable to your workplace.

WHMIS 2015 Checklist

Is your workplace compliant with the changes to the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System?

WHMIS 2015 changed requirements for product labels and safety data sheets.

The transition from WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015 ended on December 1, 2018.

This checklist will help you ensure your workplace is in compliance.

COMMON REQUIREMENTS* AND BEST PRACTICES * Refer to WHMIS requirements in your jurisdictional legislation	YES	NO	Assigned To	Date Completed
GENERAL				
Has an assessment been undertaken to determine which materials in your workplace are classified as hazardous products under WHMIS 2015?				
Is the assessment in writing and a copy made available to workers and the joint health and safety committee (JHSC) or health and safety representative (HSR), if any?				
Have all the materials classified as hazardous products with WHMIS 1988 product labels been removed from the workplace or updated with WHMIS 2015 product labels?				
Are all the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for materials classified as hazardous products been updated to WHMIS 2015 specifications (16 section format)?				
Are there procedures in place for administering first aid in the case of accidental exposure to a hazardous product? Have the procedures been reviewed by the JHSC?				
Is your local fire department informed of the type, quantity, and location of hazardous products in the workplace by the JHSC?				

	YES	NO	Assigned To	Date Completed
LABELLING				
Do all containers of hazardous products received from a supplier have a product label?				
Are product labels attached to the containers of any hazardous product received as a bulk shipment?				
Are hazardous products stored in pipes, tanks, barrels, etc. identified with a label?				
Do all containers of hazardous products decanted from the original supplier container into another container have a workplace label?				
Is there a process developed to ensure that product labels are on (or available) for all new hazardous products received?				
Is there a process developed to create and provide product labels and other means of identification when required?				
Is there a process developed to update product and workplace labels and safety data sheets with new data about a hazardous product?				
SAFETY DATA SHEETS (SDS)				
Is there an updated SDS for hazardous products received from a supplier?				
Are copies of all SDSs readily available to workers? If in electronic format, can workers readily access the information in case of an accident or emergency?				
Does the JHSC or health and safety representative for the workplace have copies of all SDSs?				
Is there a process developed for the procurement (requesting and receiving) of SDSs with new purchases?				
Is there a method developed to make the most current SDSs readily available to workers?				

	YES	NO	Assigned To	Date Completed
WORKER EDUCATION				
Have the workers who work with or in proximity to hazardous products received updated WHMIS 2015 training and instruction?				
Is there a process to identify new workers and contractors who require WHMIS education?				
Are there training records maintained?				
Is there a process to evaluate the need for additional or specialized instruction to workers (different language or learning difficulties) and provide this instruction where required?				
Is there a process to provide prompt instruction to workers whenever new product information or new hazard control information becomes available?				
Is the workplace JHSC or HSR consulted in the development and delivery of WHMIS-related worker training?				
Are WHMIS instructors, from either internal or external sources, identified in the worker education program?				
Is the training and information provided to workers tailored to circumstances and conditions specific to your workplace?				
Does the training include information concerning the hazards of each hazardous material used by or in proximity of a worker?				
Does the training include information concerning the required elements of a product label?				
Does the training include information concerning the required elements of a workplace label?				
Does the training include information concerning the required elements of a safety data sheet and how to access them?				

	YES	NO	Assigned To	Date Completed
Does the training include information concerning accidental spills or emergency procedures of hazardous materials?				
Does the training include information concerning first aid?				
Does the training include information and instruction on control measures and safe work procedures?				
Does the training include information when new products are received, or new hazard and/or hazard control information becomes available?				
Is there a process to evaluate workers' understanding of WHMIS, and provide further education and training as required?				
Is there a process to review, in consultation with the JHSC or HSR, the effectiveness of the WHMIS education and training program at least once a year?				

Pictograms

All hazard pictograms should be in the shape of a square set on one of its points, except biohazardous infectious material.

All pictograms, signal words, and hazard statements should be located on the label.

Exploding bomb
(for explosion or reactivity hazards)

Gas cylinder
(for gases under pressure)

Exclamation mark
(may cause less serious health effects or damage to the ozone layer)

Flame
(for fire hazards)

Corrosion
(for corrosive damage to metals, as well as skin, eyes)

Environment
(may cause damage to the aquatic environment)

Flame over circle
(for oxidizing hazards)

Skull and crossbones
(can cause death or toxicity with short exposure to small amounts)

Health hazard
(may cause or is suspected of causing serious health effects)

Biohazardous infectious materials
(for organisms or toxins that can cause diseases in people or animals)

PRODUCT LABELS

A WHMIS 2015 product label requires the following information:

1. Signal words
2. Hazard statements
3. Precautionary statements and pictograms
4. Product identifier
5. Supplier information

- Chemical Abstract Service registry number (CASRN)

* Non-disclosure of confidential business information can apply

An example of a bilingual label, courtesy of CCOHS, is shown below:

PRODUCT K1 / PRODUIT K1

Danger

Fatal if swallowed.
Causes skin irritation.

PRECAUTIONS:
Wear protective gloves,
Wash hands thoroughly
after handling.

Do not eat, drink, or smoke
when using this product.

Store locked up.
Dispose of contents/containers
in accordance with local regulations.

IF ON SKIN:
Wash with plenty of water.
If skin irritation occurs:
Get medical advice or attention
Take off contaiminated closthing
and wash before ruse.

IF SWALLOWED: Immediately
call a POISON CENTRE or doctor.
Rinse mouth.

Danger

Mortel en cas d'ingestion.
Provoque une irritation cutanée.

CONSEILS :
Porter des gants de protection.
Se laver les mains soigneusement
après manipulation.

Ne pas manger, boire ou fumer
en manipulant ce produit.

Garder sous clef.
Éliminer le contenu/récipient conformément
aux règlements locaux en vigueur.

EN CAS DE CONTACT AVEC LA PEAU :
Laver abondamment à l'eau.
En cas d'irritation cutanée : Demander
un avis médical/consulter un médecin.
Enlever les vêtements contaminés et
les laver avant réutilisation.

EN CAS D'INGESTION : Appeler immédiatement
un CENTRE ANTIPOISON ou un médecin.
Rincer la bouche.

Compagnie XYZ, 123 rue Machin St, Mytown, ON, N0N 0N) (123) 456-7890

SAFETY DATA SHEETS

A WHMIS 2015 Safety Data Sheet (SDS) requires 16 sections and prescribed details.

1. Identification:

- Product name or identifier
- Recommended or intended use
- Supplier identification and contact information

2. Hazard identification:

- Hazard classification(s) (class, category or subcategory)
- Label elements - pictogram(s), signal word, hazard statement(s), precautionary statement(s)
- Other hazard statements related to the nature of the chemical

3. Composition/information on ingredients

- Chemical name(s), CAS registry number* and concentrations of each material or substance

4. First Aid measures

- For each route of exposure (eye contact, skin contact, ingestion)
- Most important symptoms and effect (acute or delayed)
- Notes for special treatment by first responder or physician, if necessary

5. Fire-fighting measures

- Specific or unusual hazards of combustion or explosion
- Suitable/unsuitable extinguishing media
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) and precautions for fire-fighters

6. Accidental release measures

- Methods, materials, and PPE suitable for containment and clean up.

7. Handling and storage

- precautions for safe handling and conditions for safe storage

8. Exposure controls/personal protection

- Appropriate control measures (e.g., engineering, PPE)

9. Physical and chemical properties

- Appearance, colour, odour, pH, flash/boiling point, evaporation rate, flammability (solid and gas), solubility, etc.

10. Stability and reactivity

- Stability, chemical stability, conditions to avoid, possible hazardous reactions, incompatible materials, hazardous decomposition products

11. Toxicological information

- Description of toxic health effects
- Hazardous information and supporting data

12. Ecological information+

- Ecotoxicity (toxic effects on animals or plants), persistence and degradability, bio-accumulative potential, mobility in soil, other adverse effects

13. Disposal consideration+

14. Transport Information+

15. Regulatory Information+

16. Other Information

- Date of issue for the SDS, previous issue date, list of revisions and information related to the SDS

* Subject to confidential business information exemptions.

+ In Canada, headings in sections 12-15 are required. However, the supplier's requirement provide detail or information under these headings is optional.

More on the information elements required on a SDS can be found at the Government of Canada's website, www.canada.ca.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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