



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
University Health and Safety

**Hazard Communication Program**

**Effective Date:** December 2018, revision November 2019

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this program is to protect employees from exposures hazardous substances by ensuring employees are provided with information about hazardous substances they may encounter in the workplace.

**II. SCOPE**

This program applies to non-laboratory University personnel who are routinely exposed to hazardous substances. Harmful Physical Agents and Infectious Agents are covered under other programs.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Hazardous Substance - any chemical which is classified as a physical hazard or a health hazard, a simple asphyxiant, combustible dust, pyrophoric gas, or hazard not otherwise classified.

Health Hazard - a chemical which is classified as posing one of the following hazardous effects: acute toxicity (any route of exposure); skin corrosion or irritation; serious eye damage or eye irritation; respiratory or skin sensitization; germ cell mutagenicity; carcinogenicity; reproductive toxicity; specific target organ toxicity (single or repeated exposure); or aspiration hazard.

Physical Hazard - a chemical that is classified as posing one of the following hazardous effects: explosive; flammable (gases, aerosols, liquids, or solids); oxidizer (liquid, solid or gas); self-reactive; pyrophoric (liquid or solid); self-heating; organic peroxide; corrosive to metal; gas under pressure; or in contact with water emits flammable gas.

Routinely Exposed - means a reasonable potential for exposure exists during the normal course of assigned work. It does not include a simple walk-through of an area where a hazardous substance is present or an assignment to work in an area where a container of a hazardous substance is present but there is no actual exposure unless a spill should occur.

Safety Data Sheet (SDS) – includes information such as the properties of each chemical; the physical, health, and environmental health hazards; protective measures; and safety precautions for handling, storing, and transporting the chemical.

Secondary Container – a container used to store, transfer or transport chemicals or substances after removal from the original manufacturer container.

## **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Employee Responsibilities**

- Attend initial and annual Hazard Communication training.
- Review and understand safe handling procedures, safe work practices, personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements and emergency procedures for chemicals or other hazards in the workplace.
- Follow safe work procedures and wear PPE when required.
- Maintain appropriate labels on original containers.
- Label and cap all secondary containers.
- Notify supervisor of any uncorrected safety concerns.
- Notify supervisor of any injury or illness immediately.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities**

- Evaluate work areas to identify hazardous substances used.
- Maintain an inventory list of all products containing hazardous chemicals used by employees.
- Evaluate the need for PPE use. When appropriate, provide and enforce the use of PPE.
- Ensure primary and secondary containers containing hazardous chemicals are properly labeled as to their contents, hazards.
- Ensure employees receive initial and annual refresher training and when new products are being introduced into the workplace.
- Training must include:
  - review of hazardous substances used by employees
  - how to read and understand labels and safety data sheets
  - labeling requirements
  - how to obtain SDSs and other safety information
- Ensure employees follow safe handling procedures when storing, handling or using hazardous chemicals.
- Ensure employees know how to obtain copies of SDS sheets.
- Upon request by an employee or contractor, provide a copy of the SDS during the work shift.
- Inform employees and contractors of the hazards involved in non-routine tasks and the hazards of chemicals contained in pipes in the work area.

### **Departmental Responsibilities**

- Ensure work areas are evaluated to identify where chemical hazards exist.
- Eliminate hazardous chemicals where feasible.
- Make sure eye washes are available and maintained where necessary.
- Ensure affected employees are appropriately trained.

## **University Health and Safety Responsibilities:**

- Maintain the Hazard Communication Written Program.
- Develop systems to assist with chemical inventory maintenance.
- Assist with access to Safety Data Sheets.
- Develop and provide training resources.
- Provide technical assistance to work area performing confined space entry.
- Monitor implementation of the written program

## **V. REFERENCES**

29 CFR 1910.1200 Hazard Communication  
MN Rule 5206 Hazardous Substances; Employee Right to Know  
UMN Bloodborne Pathogen Program  
UMN Chemical Hygiene Program  
UMN Eye Wash and Emergency Shower Program  
UMN Hearing Conservation Program  
UMN Heat Stress Program  
UMN Radiation Protection Program