

TOOL BOX TALKS

Material Safety Data Sheets

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is designed to provide workers and emergency responders with proper procedures for handling or working with hazardous chemicals. Material safety data sheets provide information on fire fighting measures, first aid and personal protective equipment requirements. Anyone that uses a particular chemical on a regular basis should have an MSDS on file in case of emergency.

WORKSAFE TIPS

MSDS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- MSDS are prepared by the chemical manufacturer.
- MSDS are the key component to obtaining safety and health information about specific chemicals.
- MSDS can be from 2 to 14 pages in length.
- MSDS are sometimes found on the internet, and can be saved as an electronic file on a computer.
- When an MSDS has been photocopied too many times – contact the manufacturer for a new copy.
- When an MSDS provides limited or vague information about a chemical, **DO NOT ASSUME** the chemical is not hazardous.
- MSDS should be available for immediate use, in case there is an accident.
- Whenever an employee needs medical treatment after a chemical exposure, the MSDS must be provided to the medical professional.
- All employees should be able to recite where the MSDS are posted.
- All employees should be able to recite the hazards of unlabeled containers and barrels.

NINE MSDS SECTIONS

- Section 1 – Product Identification
- Section 2 – Hazardous Ingredients
- Section 3 – Physical Data
- Section 4 – Fire and Explosion Hazard
- Section 5 – Health Hazard
- Section 6 – Reactivity
- Section 7 – Spill and Disposal Procedures
- Section 8 – Protective Measures
- Section 9 – Special Procedures

BEST PRACTICES

- A MSDS must be present on site for each hazardous chemical or product.
 - Coal tar pitch, roofing chemicals
 - Cleaners, solvents, paints
 - Lubricants, oils, fluids
- For mixtures, have an MSDS on site for each chemical in the mixture.
- If an employee regularly uses a chemical, then he / she needs to read the MSDS, and know where copies are kept.
- Gather employees and review the MSDS for a commonly-used product. Discuss how to:
 - Fight a fire involving the chemical
 - Administer first aid if chemical exposure occurs
 - Notifying emergency services
 - Clean up a spill
 - Determine proper PPE
 - Format differences in MSDS, as they vary from one manufacturer to the next
- If an MSDS does not arrive with a shipment of chemicals or products, contact the salesperson or manufacturer for a copy.
- Contractors must make MSDS available to their employees.
- Keep a MSDS binder on site in case a chemical exposure or spill occurs.
- Keep a MSDS binder on site in case a chemical-related medical emergency occurs.
- Make MSDS binders available to employees in case of emergency.
- All employees should know where the MSDS binder is located.



These advisory materials have been developed from national standards and sources believed to be reliable, however, no guarantee is made as to the sufficiency of the information contained in the material and Missouri Employers Mutual Insurance Company assumes no liability for its use. Advice about specific situations should be obtained from a safety professional.

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