

DEPARTMENT of PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS

September 2019

The Right to Know Hazard Communication Program

Hazard Communication Program

The purpose of the Hazard Communication Program is to ensure all University employees are informed about the identity and hazards of the chemicals in their workplace and how to handle these chemicals safely. This program applies to staff working with chemicals in any area, except laboratories. This program also complies with [OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard](#).

The program includes provisions for assuring chemicals are properly labeled as to their constituents and hazards, obtaining and making available safety data sheets (SDSs) for all hazardous materials, developing a written Hazard Communication Program, and assuring all employees have received appropriate training.

Globally Harmonized System (GHS)

In 2012, OSHA modified the Hazard Communication standard to align with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS), which was established by the United Nations in 2003. The purpose of the update was to provide a common and coherent approach to classifying chemicals and communicating hazard information on labels and SDSs. This update requires manufacturers to now use a standardized format to display hazard information on labels and safety data sheets. The most notable display of these changes has been the adoption of the use of pictograms to describe potential health and physical hazards on labels and in SDSs.

Definitions and Scope

“Hazardous Substances” include a wide range of chemicals such as cleaning products, pesticides, and even toner for copiers, as well as many compounds used in instructional and research laboratories. Hazardous waste (medical, biological, radioactive, and other). “Safety Data Sheets (SDSs)” provide safety information about specific hazardous substances including the hazards and control measures. Employees and students have a “right to know” about the hazardous substances they work with and how to handle them safely. All employees are responsible for following safety instructions on labels and SDSs and complying with safety procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Physical Plant Operations Department is responsible for:

Assisting departments with general Right-To-Know information and training guidelines and Maintaining an up-to-date written Right-To-Know (hazard communication) program.

Each department is responsible for maintaining up-to-date inventories of hazardous substances and making MSDSs readily available. Each department purchasing or using hazardous chemicals is to assign a person responsible to coordinate the purchasing, inventory, dispensing, and forwarding of MSDSs as appropriate. Copies of the MSDSs for all new procurements must be sent to PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS. Departments shipping hazardous materials are to make sure that all containers shipped from WPU facilities are properly labeled and that the transporter is authorized and aware of the nature of shipment. Supervisors are responsible for providing job-specific training to all their employees, including a discussion of how to safely handle hazardous substances in their work area. Supervisors are responsible for identifying any new hazardous substance before it is introduced into the workplace and informing employees in the work area about the dangers of such hazardous substances. PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS will assist supervisors in the identification and information.

Procedures

Training

Individual departments will provide job-specific training on the safe use of hazardous substances in their work area. The training method must provide an opportunity for the employee to ask questions. The individual department may hold safety meetings to review the initial and/or additional training materials

Written/Plan

Copies of the comprehensive written Right-To-Know (Hazard Communication) is primarily available on the PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS website. The plan may be obtained from PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS office.

Warning/Labels

Hazardous substances must be labeled with the main hazard name, the hazard warning and measures to protect the user against exposure risks. All employees and students are expected to read labels and follow instructions and warnings. Detailed labeling requirements are specified in the Right-To-Know Plan.

Material/Safety/DataSheets

The purpose of the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) is to describe the physical and chemical properties of hazardous substances as well as their health hazards, routes of exposure, precautions for safe handling and use, emergency and first aid procedures, and control measures. MSDSs must be available in the immediate work area. PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS will provide assistance in obtaining MSDSs.

Record-Keeping

Each department must maintain a record of individual department training and forward a copy to PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS.

Hazardous-Chemicals-Lists

Each department is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date list of hazardous substances present. This list should be readily available to PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS.

Contractors

WPU will inform all contractors of known hazards contract employees may encounter while performing work at our facilities. Contractors similarly must disclose anticipated hazardous operations and observe our safety procedures. The project manager may contact PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS to develop job-specific safety information as appropriate.

Key References and Resources

The documents listed below may be obtained from PHYSICAL PLANT OPERATIONS. New Jersey "Employee Right -to-Know" Rules Manual & Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard 29 CFR 1910. 1200