SITE SAFETY MEETING - TOOL BOX TALK

OSHA’s Revised Hazard Communication Standard

What is GHS?

For many years now, employees could gather limited information about the hazardous chemicals they work with by looking at container labels and reading Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS’s). However, there was no set format to govern how the companies that produced or distributed those chemicals categorized the hazards of their products, nor how the labels and MSDS’s had to appear. The end result was a confusing mish-mash of information that often failed to help workers quickly discern the hazards of the products they were using.

To address this problem, OSHA recently revised their Hazard Communication Standard to align with the international “Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals”, commonly referred to as “GHS”. As a result, manufacturers and distributors of hazardous chemicals and products must begin to standardize how they categorize the hazards of their products, as well as the information and format of their container labels and Safety Data Sheets.

Here is an overview of some of the changes you will start seeing very soon, if not already:

- “Material Safety Data Sheets” (MSDS’s) will be replaced by “Safety Data Sheets” (SDS’s);
- The new SDS’s will be divided into 16 sections, with information about the product’s chemical hazards appearing in a set order that is always the same for every sheet;
- Container labels will all display mandatory information, including a product identifier that is exactly the same as that appearing on the corresponding Safety Data Sheet (SDS);
- Container labels will also have standardized “signal words”, “hazard statements”, and “precautionary statements” to help insure you are alerted to applicable dangers and necessary safeguards you should follow when working with that product;
- All container labels will also display one or more of eight specific “pictograms”, which are basically icons that appears in small red boxes that will help you to quickly identify the specific hazard or hazards associated with the product you are using.

OSHA has given employers until December 1, 2013 to train their employees on all of the required elements of the new labeling systems and Safety Data Sheets (SDS’s). Additional information available will focus more on the specifics of how the new hazard warning systems work. In the meantime, you will still see old labels and MSDS’s around until the transition to the revised Hazard Communication Standard is fully implemented.

For further information regarding OSHA’s New Hazard Communication Standard to align with the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals visit:
https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/

BE SAFE… KNOW & UNDERSTAND THE DANGERS OF WORKING AROUND CHEMICAL HAZARDS!

U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration
For more complete information: www.osha.gov or (800) 321-OSHA
Questions to start discussion:

1. What are some changes being made in the classification and labeling of hazardous chemicals?
2. What is the deadline for employers to educate their employees on the SDS’s and “pictograms”?
3. What will the label information include to help ensure you are alerted to applicable dangers and necessary safeguards you should follow when working with that product?

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Meeting Notes:
Employee Comments / Concerns: ______________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Other Safety issues to be addressed on the job: ______________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Training Record: Date: ________ Jobsite: _________________ By: ________________ Title: _______
Employee Name           Emp #          Signature            Employee Name           Emp #          Signature
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Tool Box Talks are employee safety meetings designed to serve as 15 minute on-site training sessions focused on key topics relative to your work.

Site superintendents or foremen are responsible for holding meetings each week usually during a morning break. This important segment of your general safety program encourages open discussion on the topic of the week and allows employees to share their experiences about accidents and safe or unsafe work practices. Recordkeeping is mandatory and all involved must sign off on each session.

Topics for your company could include: electrical safety, excavation and trenching safety, fall protection, scaffold safety, stairway and ladder safety, hazard communication, fire safety, personal protective equipment, tool safety, materials handling, etc.

Sample Tool Box Talks are provided compliments of the Safety Committee of the Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Greater Hartford. For more information on Tool Box Talks contact The HBRA office 860 563-4212 or visit www.hbahartford.com. Tool Box Safety Talks can be purchased from the National Association of Homebuilders 1-800 368-5242, www.nahb.com or may be available through your business insurance provider.

BUILD SAFELY – THINK SAFETY