

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN THE WORK PLACE

The Changes

Over the next few years, your School will be impacted by the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). The GHS was developed as a way to bring into agreement the chemical regulations and standards of countries around the world. GHS addresses the classification of chemicals and the communication of hazards related to those chemicals to users of the products via warning labels and safety data sheets.

The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is the law in the U.S. and will soon be aligned with GHS. With the implementation of GHS, many chemical suppliers are now transitioning from the current MSDS format to the GHS SDS (Safety Data Sheet) format. The SDS format is nearly identical to the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) 16 section MSDS format but there are a few minor changes to the forms. The changes will be largely instituted by the chemical manufacturers and distributors but schools will need to make some changes as well.

To read more about the changes from OSHA, please click

Benefits of Harmonization

Exposure to hazardous chemicals is one of the most serious threats facing American workers today. Revising OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard will improve the quality and consistency of hazard information, making it safer for workers to do their jobs and easier for employers to stay competitive.

Benefits to workers and members of the public include consistent, simplified communications on chemical hazards, safe handling practices, greater awareness of hazards, and overall safer use of chemicals. Benefits to employers include safer work environments, improved relations with workers, increased efficiency, reduced costs of compliance, and expanded use of training programs on health and safety.

For more information about the benefits of harmonization, visit OSHA's Guide to the GHS.

Important Dates for Schools

The following are the key deadlines regarding the GHS changes that districts should note:

- **December 1, 2013:** Employees must be trained by the districts on how to properly read the GHS system, including SDSs.
- **June 1, 2015:** The switch to SDS must be completed by all chemical manufacturers and distributors. Districts should have the majority of their MSDSs switched to the SDS format.
- **June 1, 2016:** Districts must be fully compliant with the HCS 2012 chemical classification guidelines.

How the Changes are Being Addressed

Two new courses are available to SafeSchools Training subscribers, like the Quileute Tribal School, and can be used to meet the December 1, 2013 staff training deadline:

1. [Hazard Communications: Right to Understand](#)
2. [Safety Data Sheets \(SDS\)](#)

The *Hazard Communications: Right to Understand* course reflects OSHA's 2012 revised Hazard Communication Standard that now gives workers the "right to understand" hazards they may encounter in the workplace. The course also addresses implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification of Chemicals and Labeling (GHS) and the change from Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to the new Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

The *Safety Data Sheets (SDS)* course provides school staff with an understanding of Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) as they relate to hazardous chemicals and the knowledge to use the information found in the SDSs to protect yourself and others in your school.

These courses are now available in the Quileute Tribal School's *SafeSchools Training* site. Because the new OSHA regulations include a transition period allowing schools time to switch to the new GHS system, the traditional *Hazard Communications: Right to Know* course and *Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)* course will be available in addition to the new courses.

To visit the School's training site, go to <http://quileutenation.wa.safeschools.com/login>.

