

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**SECTION: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND LIFE SAFETY**

**SUBJECT: HAZARD COMMUNICATION**

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**I. PURPOSE**

This procedure establishes the requirements for hazard communication at the University of Houston concerning responsibilities, training, hazardous chemical labeling, and safety data sheets. It applies to all University of Houston locations where any hazardous chemical or extremely hazardous substance is received, stored, used, reacted, developed, or produced, including academic laboratories. This procedure applies to all University of Houston staff, faculty, students and lessees as well as subcontractors.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

A. Article: A manufactured item that is formed to a specific shape or design during manufacture; that has end-use functions dependent in whole or in part on its shape or design during end use; and that does not release, or otherwise result in exposure to, a hazardous chemical under normal conditions of use.

B. Chemical name: The scientific designation of a chemical in accordance with the nomenclature system developed by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) or the Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) rules of nomenclature; or a name that clearly identifies the chemical for the purpose of conducting a hazard evaluation.

C. Container: Any bag, barrel, bottle, box, can, cylinder, drum, reaction vessel, storage tank, or the like that contains a hazardous chemical. Pipes or piping systems, engines, fuel tanks, or other operating systems in a vehicle are not considered to be containers.

D. Exposure: An employee that is subjected to a hazardous chemical in the course of employment through any route of entry, including inhalation, ingestion, skin contact, or absorption. The term includes potential, possible, or accidental exposure under normal conditions of use or in a reasonably foreseeable emergency.

E. Hazardous chemical: An element, compound, or mixture of elements or compounds that is a physical hazard or health hazard as defined by Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1910, Subpart Z, Toxic and Hazardous Substances,

Section 1200, Hazard communication (29 CFR 1910.1200).

F. Health Hazard: A chemical for which there is statistically significant evidence based on at least one study conducted in accordance with established scientific principles that acute or chronic health effects may occur in exposed employees. The term health hazard includes chemicals which are carcinogens, toxic or highly toxic agents, reproductive toxins, irritants, corrosives, sensitizers, hepatotoxins, nephrotoxins, and neurotoxins, agents which act on the hematopoietic system and agents which damage the lungs, skin, eyes, or mucous membranes.

G. Label: Any written, printed, or graphic material displayed on or affixed to containers of hazardous materials.

H. Laboratory: A facility where relatively small quantities of hazardous chemicals are used on a non-production basis.

I. Safety Data Sheet (SDS): Written or printed material concerning a hazardous chemical which is prepared in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1200 paragraph g.

J. Physical Hazard: A chemical for which there is scientifically valid evidence that it is a combustible liquid, a compressed gas, explosive, flammable, an organic peroxide, an oxidizer, pyrophoric, unstable (reactive) or water reactive.

K. Qualified Individual: An individual who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, or professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training, and experience, has successfully demonstrated his or her ability to solve or resolve problems relating to the subject matter, the work, or the project, and is familiar with the hazards involved.

### III. PROCEDURES

#### A. Individual Workers (including faculty, staff and students)

1. Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as required by University policy and procedures.
2. Inform his or her supervisor of:
  - a. Any symptoms of overexposure that may possibly be related to hazardous chemicals.
  - b. Missing labels on containers.
  - c. Malfunctioning safety equipment.

3. Use approved labels on hazardous chemical containers. Approved labels for hazardous chemicals shall contain the identity of the hazardous chemical, the appropriate physical and health hazard warnings, and the name and address of the chemical manufacturer. When transferring from a labeled container to an unlabeled container photocopy the labeled container's label and affix it to the unlabeled container; therefore the accuracy of label's associated safety data sheet (SDS) and product liability on purchased chemical remains the responsibility of the manufacturer.
4. Do not remove or deface existing labels on purchased hazardous chemicals unless the container is empty and ready for disposal.
5. Use approved containers for hazardous materials.
6. Know the location of emergency equipment, such as first-aid supplies, emergency safety showers and eyewashes, etc.
7. Know his or her role in emergency procedures.
8. Attend all hazard communication (HazCom) training sessions deemed necessary.

B. Principal investigators, supervisors, or foremen

1. Ensure that all workers within their group receive the appropriate hazard communication (HazCom) training.
2. Ensure that new workers within their group receive the necessary training prior to their working with any hazardous chemicals in their specific areas.
3. Ensure that if any new hazardous chemicals are introduced into the work area, workers within the group are given documented training and information regarding those chemicals prior to those chemicals actually being used. This includes specific training on chemicals for new or transferred workers.
4. Keep a list of the hazardous chemicals used within the group up-to-date.
5. Ensure that a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is available for each chemical found on the list of hazardous chemicals for that group. Safety Data Sheets are available on the EHLS web site at <http://uh.edu/ehls/general/general-safety/sds/>

IV.

1. Periodically inspect engineering controls and personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Make routine surveys of the work area to ensure safe practices are being

followed.

3. Ensure required labeling practices are being followed.
4. Enforce applicable safety and health rules.

B. Department Manager, Administrator or Director

1. Follow-up to ensure principal investigators, supervisors or foremen are carrying out prescribed University policy and procedures concerning hazard communication.
2. Notify Environmental Health and Life Safety of any operating changes affecting the hazardous materials being used.

C. Human Resources Department

Conduct the basic training program for all new employees that cover the Hazard Communication Standard established by Environmental Health and Life Safety

D. Environmental Health and Life Safety

1. Administer the hazard communication (HazCom) policy and procedure.
2. Keep a current Inventory of chemicals used within the University as well as maintain a current file of where to secure Safety Data Sheets (SDS) at <http://uh.edu/ehls/general/general-safety/sds/>
3. Periodically review work areas to ensure compliance with this policy and procedure.
4. Coordinate emergency procedures and fire department activities related to hazardous chemicals.
5. Post the Notice to Employees in all buildings which contain hazardous chemicals.
6. Establish Tier II chemical inventory checklists based on:
  - a. 10,000 pounds for OSHA hazardous chemical.
  - b. 500 pounds or Threshold Planning Quantity for EPA extremely hazardous substances.

7. File Tier II Chemical Inventory Report with the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS).

F. Contractors

1. Upon request by Environmental Health and Life Safety, provide Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for hazardous chemicals brought onto the University of Houston campus.

2. Contractors must follow this procedure and their own hazard communication (HazCom) program.

V. REFERENCES

Title 25, Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 502, Texas Hazard Communication Act.

Title 25, Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 506, Public Employer Community Right-to-Know Act.

Title 29, CFR, Part 1910, Subpart Z, Section 1200, Hazard Communication.