



# CENTRAL NEWS<sup>®</sup>

## Getting Familiar with GHS

By Kaysha Ballentine



As you look around at many of the workplace chemicals, you will probably start to see some changes taking place. The reason for these changes is that the US Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has recently undergone a change to their Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) to align with the Globally Harmonized System of Classifications and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). Enough acronyms for you, yet? Basically, what this means is that the labels and safety data sheets for our products and other US workplace chemicals are going to look a little different.

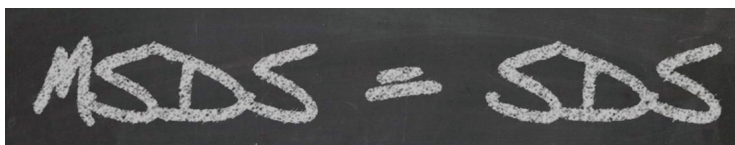
### Why the change?

OSHA's intended goal was to make a more universal system for chemical safety regulations. The old system was so varied that the

same chemical might be listed as hazardous and non-hazardous by different labels or safety data sheets. Also, it should be easier for employees to find the safety information they need if all of their data sheets and labels have the same general sections and definitions. OSHA markets the new system as more "global" and designed to help companies with international markets meet varying regulations.

### MSDS to SDS

One of the big changes is the switch from Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Do not let the missing "M" mislead you, the two are essentially the same thing. Both are documents (usually long ones), that are shipped with hazardous chemicals, providing warning of specific dangers and handling pro-



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cedures for that material. MSDSs had certain information that was required, but format and supplemental information could vary greatly. The format of SDSs is much more rigid, requiring 16 specific sections, in a specific

through your skin or other materials. A pictogram that looks like a person with an exploding chest indicates a carcinogen, mutagen or toxin. An O with flames coming out the top (which some people, namely your



order. For the most part, these should not look too different from what you are used to seeing, since it is very similar to one of the popular MSDS formats. They are still the go-to resource for understanding the potential risk of a material.

### Label Changes

Another big change you will see is on product labels. OSHA is now requiring specific symbols (hazard pictograms), signal words, hazard statements, precautionary statements, a product identifier and supplier identification to appear on labels.

Symbols (hazard pictograms) are pictures that stand for certain health, physical and environmental hazards. All of them are red diamonds with black and white pictures inside. For example, a pictogram with fire means a material is flammable. Test tubes spilling on surfaces and a hand (with alarming squiggles coming off) denotes a corrosive material, meaning it “eats”

marketing manager, think looks like a head that is on fire), means the material is an oxidizer. An exclamation point indicates an irritant. There are nine main GHS pictograms, but these are the ones most likely to apply to Cen-Pe-Co products.

Signal words are “Danger” and “Warning.” They are meant to provide a general indication the severity of a material’s hazards. Hazard statements are specific statements assigned to a hazard class and category. These might include “causes serious eye damage,” “toxic if swallowed,” and “toxic to the aquatic life with long lasting effects.” The signal word and hazard statements will vary depending on the product.

Precautionary statements are phrases that give instructions on how to prevent or minimize adverse effects of a material. These include phrases such as “Wear eye protection,” “Keep away from heat/sparks/open flame. No smoking,” and “Do not eat, drink or smoke when

**DANGER**

**WARNING**

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using this product. “

While these requirements are meant to make information more universal and easier for companies to comply with regulations of various countries, they also take up a lot of room on the labels.

### Implementation

Cen-Pe-Co is working hard to comply with the new standards and regulations. The national deadline was June 1, 2015. However, since the big chemical suppliers did not provide SDSs until the last minute and we could not compile ours until we received them, compliance was impossible.

Anybody could see it coming, and ILMA (Independent Lubricant Manufacturers Association) petitioned senators for a tiered system. They wanted blenders to have a later compliance date in order to give them time to produce their SDSs and labels after they had received the information from their suppliers. The deadline was not changed, but enforcement was relaxed if the companies can document their effort to comply. This means that in addition to completing the daunting task of converting to SDS, we also have to document our efforts to comply.

Some of our customers are caught in the same impossible-to-comply legislation, as they have to have the new SDS format for every item in their factory or shop, and will have to document their requests for our SDS. We are working as fast as week can, but at the time of this writing, we have not yet received some of our SDSs from our suppliers. Expect to see updated SDSs and labels for our products in the coming months. You can log in to the sales portal on

the website to print those already updated.

### Final Warning

Another thing to keep in mind when reading through the new labels and documents is that sometimes warnings make risks seem worse than they are. In an industrial setting, even toothpaste has an SDS

that suggests wearing safety glasses with side shields when handling to prevent eye irritation. 5% acetic acid solution, the household vinegar used for everything from cleaning to salad dressing, carries the “Warning” signal word. The SDS for vinegar also includes the following GHS Classifica-



tions: “Skin Corrosion/Irritation Category 2, Serious Eye Damage/Eye Irritation Category 2A, Hazardous to the aquatic environment - Acute Category.” So while SDSs offer some important, and sometimes scary information, most adverse effects of our products can be avoided with some common sense and safety precautions.

### Sources

- <http://www.carolina.com/pdf/msds/vinegarghs.pdf>
- <https://www.ilma.org/resources/docs/GHSLetterTemplateToYourRepresentative.pdf>
- <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/ghs.html#4.3>
- [https://www.pg.com/productsafety/msds/health\\_care/oral\\_care/Crest\\_Vivid\\_White\\_Toothpaste.pdf](https://www.pg.com/productsafety/msds/health_care/oral_care/Crest_Vivid_White_Toothpaste.pdf)



ABOVE: Dave Stevenson- ME and Duane Tooman - OH celebrate the wedding of Brandon and Jodie Simon of the Simon Sez Pulling Team.



RIGHT: The Simon Sez Team wins the "Top Crew" award at Tomah, WI.



It takes a GREAT team to make "The World's Best Heavy-Duty Lubricants" and here they are: Our Cen-Pe-Co Lubricants manufacturing team in the Walcott plant.



Working the Northeastern Logging Expo is the crew from Diesel Fuel Systems - ME representing Cen-Pe-Co. (L to R) Pete Hikel, Tim Kennedy, and Reggie Lacadie.