

**OSHA aligns Hazard Communication Standard with the United Nations'
Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS).**

The Hazard Communication standard, published in 1983, was referred to as "the right to know". The revised Hazard Communication standard is being called "**the right to understand.**"

Haz Comm 2012, as it is known at the agency, communicates information about chemical hazards in the workplace "more simply, clearly and effectively," according to OSHA's announcement. "It empowers workers with the best information about the chemicals they handle in the workplace."

The **major changes** to the standard announced on March 20 include:

1. **Hazard classification:** Provides specific criteria for classification of health and physical hazards, as well as classification of mixtures.
2. **Labels:** Chemical manufacturers and importers will be required to provide a label that includes a harmonized signal word, pictogram and hazard statement for each hazard class and category. Precautionary statements also must be provided.
3. **Safety data sheets:** Now will have a specified 16-section format.
4. **Information and training:** Employers are required to train workers by Dec. 1, 2013 on the new labels' elements and safety data sheets' format to facilitate recognition and understanding.

Did you catch that last part? By December of 2013, we must train our employees to recognize the new labeling system and MSDS format.

OSHA has provided some very good, simple, and easy-to-use tools we can use to meet these training requirements:

http://www.osha.gov/Publications/HazComm_QuickCard_Labels.html

http://www.osha.gov/Publications/HazComm_QuickCard_SafetyData.html

http://www.osha.gov/Publications/HazComm_QuickCard_Pictogram.html

<http://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/effectivedates.html>

While full compliance with all provisions of the new standard doesn't take effect until 2015, OSHA wants us to train our employees by 2013 because we may begin seeing some of the new labels and MSDS sheets in the updated format.

Produced by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
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Comments/questions?
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