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Bureau of Land Management**

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**New Mexico State Office  
Hazard Communication Program**

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## **Hazard Communication Program**

### **Policy**

The use of hazardous chemicals in the workplace shall be minimized to the extent possible. Where hazardous chemical use is required for a specific task, employees and volunteers shall be informed of the physical and health hazards of the chemicals. Supervisors and employees involved in the use of chemicals will comply fully with the provisions of this Hazard Communication Program. This plan shall be supplemented, as necessary, to ensure that the Field Office plan is site-specific to its operational processes.

### **Authority and Responsibility**

The Field Managers are responsible for the implementation of this Program at their respective Field Offices.

The Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Notifying all employees of the purpose and intent of the Hazard Communication Program;
2. Ensuring that affected employees are trained in General Hazard Communication;
3. Identifying the hazardous chemicals in their respective work areas;
4. Ensuring that hazardous chemicals are properly labeled;
5. Ensuring that non or less hazardous chemicals are considered for the job before a hazardous chemical is purchased;
6. Obtaining copies of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) when ordering hazardous chemicals (Bankcard/Purchase Request);
7. Contacting the manufacturer or supplier of hazardous chemicals when the MSDS was not provided with the shipment;
8. Posting the MSDS where the hazardous chemicals are used or stored;
9. Providing a copy of the MSDS to the Safety Officer/Coordinator; and
10. Providing personal protective equipment (PPE).

The Field Office Safety Officer/Coordinator is responsible for:

1. Maintaining an inventory of the hazardous chemicals used in the Field Office;
2. Identifying appropriate PPE;
3. Assisting supervisors in providing the required training; and
4. Providing employees and supervisors with the right information on the hazardous properties of chemicals as requested.

Affected Employees are responsible for:

1. Complying with the Hazard Communication Program procedures;
2. Participating in the general and specific hazard communication training session;
3. Understanding how to read chemical labels and MSDS;
4. Understanding and taking necessary precautions when handling hazardous chemicals; and
5. Using PPE.

### **Information and Training**

Employees shall receive information and training on hazardous chemicals in their work area at the time of their initial assignment and whenever a new physical or health hazard the employees have not previously been trained about is introduced into their work area. Information and training may be designed to cover categories of hazards (i.e., flammability, corrosivity, carcinogenicity, etc.) or specific chemicals. Chemical-specific information shall always be available through labels and MSDS.

This general training program shall provide an introduction to the following:

1. The requirements of the standard;
2. Any operations in their work area where hazardous chemicals are present;
3. The location and availability of the written Hazard Communication Program;
4. The details of the Hazard Communication Program including an explanation of the labeling system and the MSDS, and how employees can obtain and use the appropriate hazard information;
5. Methods and observations that may be used to detect the presence or release of a hazardous chemical in the work area;

6. The physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area; and
7. The measures employees can take to protect themselves from these hazards including work-practice controls, emergency procedures, and PPE.

### **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)**

MSDS are the primary data source intended to outline the special precautions and controls necessary for handling specific hazardous chemicals. MSDS are typically provided by the chemical manufacturer or chemical supplier and are usually divided into approximately 8 to 10 sections. The different sections of a MSDS may vary slightly from manufacturer to manufacturer (i.e., section titles and section order), but each MSDS will contain the following information:

1. Chemical identification;
2. Physical and chemical characteristics;
3. Physical hazards;
4. Health hazards;
5. Primary routes of entry;
6. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL);
7. Carcinogenicity;
8. Generally applicable precautions for safe handling and use;
9. Generally applicable control measures;
10. Emergency and first aid procedures;
11. Date of preparation;
12. Name, address, and telephone number of the chemical manufacturer; and
13. Disposal procedures.

### **Labeling**

To ensure that appropriate information concerning the hazards of a chemical are accessible to employees, all containers of hazardous chemicals shall be labeled. Labels shall be legible, in English (additional languages may be included as necessary), and prominently displayed on the container. Chemical manufacturers, importers, and distributors shall ensure that every container of hazardous chemicals entering the workplace is appropriately labeled with the identity of the hazardous chemical(s) (common and/or chemical name), appropriate hazard warnings, and the name and address of the chemical manufacturer, importer, or other responsible party.

If a chemical label in the workplace becomes damaged, illegible, or is inadvertently removed from a container, it shall be replaced immediately by the supervisor or designee.

Replacement labels shall include, at a minimum, the identity of the hazardous chemical(s) (common and/or chemical name), appropriate hazard warnings, words, pictures, symbols, or a

combination thereof, which provide at least the general information regarding the hazards of the chemicals.

Chemicals that are transferred from the original container into a secondary container shall be identified by a label on the secondary container. Exception: A secondary container is not required to be labeled if the material will be completely used during that employee's work shift; however, the State Safety Office strongly recommends that all secondary containers be labeled despite this exception.

To comply with labeling requirements, the BLM New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas (NM/OK/TX/KS) region has adopted the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) labeling system.

The labels can be purchased from most safety vendors, or you may contact the Safety Officer/Coordinator for additional information.

The following colors are used to represent the hazards on the NFPA label:

1. Red represents the fire hazard;
2. Blue represents the health hazard;
3. Yellow represents the reactivity hazard; and
4. White represents the specific hazard.

### **Inventory of Hazardous Chemicals**

The Field Office Safety Officer/Coordinator will maintain the inventory of the hazardous chemicals used in the workplace. The chemical inventory will be updated as new hazardous chemicals are introduced to the workplace.

*Supervisors shall inform the Safety Officer/Coordinator of all new hazardous chemical purchases and provide him or her with a copy of the MSDS to maintain the inventory listing. This action is critical in ensuring that the chemical inventory is current.*

### **Nonroutine Tasks**

No nonroutine tasks are performed in the NM/OK/TX/KS region.

### **Other Personnel Exposure (Contractors)**

The Contract Officer Representative will inform the Safety Officer/Coordinator of any work done by contract. The Safety Officer/Coordinator will provide other personnel or outside contractors with the following information:

1. Hazardous chemicals to which they may be exposed while in the workplace;
2. Measures to lessen the possibility of exposure;
3. Location of MSDS for all hazardous chemicals; and
4. Procedures to follow if they are exposed.

In addition, the Safety Officer/Coordinator will contact each contractor before work is started in order to gather and disseminate any information concerning hazardous chemicals that the contractor is bringing into the workplace and vice versa.