7 MINUTE Safety Trainer

Understanding GHS Labels

GOALS

This safety session teaches employees to:

- Identify hazard and precautionary information on GHS labels.
- Use chemical container labels effectively to prevent injuries and illness.

Applicable Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.1200 (Hazard communication)

1. The GHS requires new labels for chemical containers.

- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has adopted the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) as part of the Hazard Communication Standard.
- As a result of the implementation of the GHS, new labels for chemical containers have been designed to provide more complete, standardized, and easily accessible safety and health information.
- Workplaces may use alternatives to GHS labels as long as the alternative label is consistent with GHS label requirements.
  - —For example, your workplace might use National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) labels or Hazardous Material Information System (HMIS) labels.

2. GHS labels provide basic information about workplace chemicals.

- Each hazardous chemical label must be prominently displayed, and text must be in English.
  - —Other languages may also be included, if appropriate, but can't be substituted for English.
- Labels must include a "product identifier," which gives a name or number that enables the user to identify the chemical.
  - —The identifier must allow you to cross-reference information on the label with the list of hazardous chemicals in your organization's written hazard communication program and the information on the safety data sheet (SDS).
- Labels must give information about the chemical supplier, including the name, address, and telephone number of the chemical manufacturer, importer, or other responsible party.
- Supplemental information, such as directions for use, fill date, expiration date, and weight, may also be provided.
- GHS labels will also provide information about first aid and what to do in case of a fire involving the chemical, if appropriate.

3. GHS labels specifically identify hazards in words and graphics.

- GHS labels include a signal word to indicate the severity of the hazard, such as the more severe word "danger" or the less severe "warning."
- Hazard statements assigned to a hazard class and category describe the nature of the hazards of a chemical, including the degree of hazard, where appropriate.
  - —For example, "Highly flammable liquid and vapor. May cause liver and kidney damage."

Understanding GHS Labels

- Pictograms required on GHS labels may include a symbol and other graphic elements intended to convey specific information about the hazards of a chemical.
  - —Pictograms are displayed on a white background within a diamond-shaped box with a red border.
- GHS labels include precautionary statements that describe recommended measures to minimize or prevent injury or illness resulting from exposure to a hazardous chemical, or from improper storage or handling.
  - —For example, "Keep container tightly closed," "Store in a cool, well-ventilated place that is locked," "Do not breathe vapors," and "Wear protective gloves."

4. Always read labels carefully before using a hazardous chemical.

- Before handling any hazardous chemical, read the label to identify hazards and required precautionary measures to prevent exposures.
- Pay special attention to hazard warnings and take them seriously.
- If there is anything you don't understand about any information on a chemical label, ask your supervisor before using the chemical.
- In addition to reading the label, also consult the SDS before using a chemical.
- Report missing labels or labels that are damaged or cannot be read.
  - —Do not use a container if it is not properly labeled.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Bring samples of GHS labels (or other GHS-compliant labels used in your workplace) to the meeting and review them with participants. Make sure that participants can identify the information on the labels. Also, explain the procedure for reporting missing or damaged labels.

CONCLUSION:

- GHS labels contain important safety and health information.
- Always read the label before using any hazardous chemical. The label contains hazard warnings and precautionary measures that can protect you from harmful exposures.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Understanding GHS Labels quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their ability to understand GHS labels and whether they need to review this important topic again soon.

7 MINUTE Safety Trainer

Understanding GHS Labels

QUIZ 1210

C-1E

UNDERSTANDING GHS LABELS QUIZ

1. **The Global Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) recommends but does not require changes in chemical container labels.**
   a. True b. False

2. **Alternative labels are permitted if:**
   a. They are written in a language other than English.
   b. They comply with GHS labeling requirements.
   c. They are less expensive than GHS labels.

3. **The product identifier on a GHS label identifies the chemical supplier.**
   a. True b. False

4. **The signal word on a GHS label indicates:**
   a. Weight of container
   b. Severity of hazard
   c. Expiration date for chemical

5. **The product identifier must be cross-referenced to the safety data sheet (SDS).**
   a. True b. False

6. **The word "warning" on a GHS label means the chemical is more hazardous than a chemical labeled with the word "danger."**
   a. True b. False

7. **Pictograms are used only on GHS labels written in languages other than English.**
   a. True b. False

8. **The hazard statement on a GHS label identifies first aid and emergency information.**
   a. True b. False

9. **Precautionary statements indicate:**
   a. Nature of the hazard
   b. Degree of hazard
   c. Measures to minimize exposures

10. **If a hazardous chemical container is missing a GHS or approved alternative label, open the container to check what's inside.**
    a. True b. False

When you have completed this quiz, turn it in to your supervisor.

Name:_____ **Date:**_____

7 MINUTE Safety Trainer

Understanding GHS Labels

ANSWERS TO UNDERSTANDING GHS LABELS QUIZ

1. b. False. The GHS requires new labels for hazardous chemical containers. These labels are designed especially to be compliant with GHS requirements.
2. b. Alternative labels, such as National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) or Hazardous Material Information System (HMIS) labels, may be used as long as they are GHS-compliant.
3. b. False. The product identifier gives a name or number that enables you to identify the chemical.
4. b. The signal word indicates the severity of the hazard.
5. a. True. This way you can easily find and consult the SDS.
6. b. False. The signal word "danger" indicates a more severe hazard than if the signal word "warning" is used on the label.
7. b. False. All GHS labels must include pictograms that convey specific hazard information using symbols or graphics. Pictograms are displayed on a white background within a diamond-shaped box with a red border.
8. b. False. The hazard statement describes the nature of the chemical's hazards.
9. c. Precautionary statements tell you the measures you need to take to prevent or minimize injuries or illness due to exposures to the chemical.
10. b. False. Never open a hazardous chemical container if the label is missing or illegible. Report the problem to a supervisor right away.