

HAZARDOUS WORKPLACE SUBSTANCES PROCEDURE

Hazardous workplace substances refer to hazardous substances and dangerous goods used and stored at the workplace. Hazardous substances have the potential to harm the health and safety of people at the workplace. Dangerous goods are classified on the basis of immediate physical or chemical effects such as fire, explosion, corrosion and poisoning.

PURCHASING WORKPLACE SUBSTANCES

Hazardous substances and dangerous goods which are intended to be used in the workplace or in any work activity should be subject to prior approval. Workers are not to bring their own selection of hazardous chemicals/dangerous goods into the workplace without prior approval from management.

APPROVAL OF THE SUBSTANCE SHALL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

- determination of any health surveillance;
- supply of a Material Safety Data Sheet ('MSDS') from the supplier; and
- product selection on the basis of the lowest possible hazard (considering all hazard characteristics).

SAFE USE OF WORKPLACE SUBSTANCES

1. Hazardous substances are not to be transported nor stored in containers normally used for food or drink.
2. A register of all hazardous substances/dangerous goods will be maintained. The workplace substances register will include:
 - a list of all hazardous substances/dangerous goods used and kept on site; and
 - reference to material safety data sheets and documented risk assessments.

This register will be updated on an as needed basis. This register will be accessible to any personnel who may be exposed to the substance and in particular whose responsibilities include first aid and emergency response.

3. Material Safety Data Sheets (**MSDS**) are to be obtained for all substances (where possible) that are used in the workplace. These can be obtained from the supplier or the manufacturer of the substance. MSDSs are to be readily accessible to all employees. Note that since some chemicals are labelled, stored and used in the workplace for duties similar to those applied in household use, these chemicals do not have to be as rigorously controlled. However, it is still advisable to provide workers with information, instruction and supervision, etc.
4. Hazardous substances/dangerous goods shall be stored in accordance with the relevant MSDS, in their original containers and with any product labelling related to health and safety in a legible condition at all times. Containers shall be effectively closed at all times when not in immediate use.

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5. Liquids such as petrol, kerosene, thinners, and other flammable substances are a significant fire risk. Care should be taken when handling and storing flammable substances.
6. If a spillage occurs it must be immediately cleaned up and correctly disposed of, in accordance with the MSDS, and any local environmental regulatory requirement.
7. If substances are decanted into smaller containers, the containers must be clearly marked to indicate the contents. Food and drink containers are never to be used to decant substances.
8. Any disposal of dangerous or hazardous substances will be conducted in accordance with relevant legislation and the MSDS.
9. Training and instruction will be provided on the correct use, storage handling and transport of workplace substances.
10. Risk assessments will be conducted for any hazardous substance using the workplace substances checklist and related information.
11. Personal protective equipment will be provided in accordance with the MSDS and a workplace substance risk assessment.

REVIEW

This procedure will be reviewed annually during the OHS/ WHS Audit Program, through consultation with employees/workers, HSRs and/or WHS committees, after an incident involving hazardous chemicals/dangerous goods, and when legislative requirements change.

RECORDS

- Workplace Substances Checklist
- Workplace Substances Register

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