










# Hazard communications: Understanding product warning labels

## Takeaways

- Hazard communication requires employers to make safety data sheets (SDS) available for all potentially hazardous chemicals in the workplace.
- All potentially hazardous substances must be labeled, regardless of the size and quantity.
- The nine pictograms associated with the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) communicate a hazard without words.
- Know where your company's safety data sheets are located.
- Name the five pieces of information that must be displayed on secondary containers.

Under Oregon OSHA's Hazard Communication standards, chemicals in the workplace must be classified and labeled in alignment with the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System (GHS). Employers who have workplace chemicals must have a written communication program and make safety data sheets (SDS) available. They must educate employees on all hazards by using pictograms, which communicate hazard risks without words.

Employees should be familiar with the meanings of these pictograms:

<b>Health hazard</b> Carcinogens, respiratory sensitizers, reproductive toxicity, target organ toxicity, germ cell mutagens 	<b>Flame</b> Flammable gases, liquids, and solids; self-reactives; pyrophorics 	<b>Exclamation mark</b> Irritant, dermal sensitizer, acute toxicity (harmful) 
<b>Gas cylinder</b> Compressed gases; liquefied gases; dissolved gases 	<b>Corrosion</b> Skin corrosion; serious eye damage 	<b>Exploding bomb</b> Explosives, self-reactives, organic peroxides 
<b>Flame over circle</b> Oxidizing gases; liquids and solids 	<b>Environment</b> Aquatic toxicity 	<b>Skull &amp; crossbones</b> Acute toxicity (severe) 

## Secondary containers

Chemicals that have been transferred into secondary containers must display the following information (found on the original container or safety data sheet):

- 1 Contents
- 2 Physical hazards
- 3 Health hazards
- 4 Protective measures
- 5 How to find more information

## Take action (Complete one or more activities as a team)

- Which pictogram is most frequently found in your facility? What is that chemical, how is it used, and what does your team do to protect employees from risks?
- Are there any unlabeled containers in your area that are potentially hazardous but missing a pictogram? Review the safety data sheet for the chemical, then ensure the container displays the hazard pictogram and other required information (see above).
- Take a quick walk to where employees can access safety data sheets for hazards present in the workplace; review the sheets to find the most hazardous chemical used.

