

Hazard communication Chemicals in the workplace

Here is an easy way to keep workers safe and comply with this requirement.



Do you still have a **Material Safety Data Sheet** (MSDS) notebook? That might be your first clue that the information needs to be updated. The world switched to **Safety Data Sheets** (SDS) in 2012.

Which also means that if any of your sheets are older than 2012, they need to be replaced.

Examples of required SDS that might surprise you:

- WD40
- Brake cleaner
- Spray paint (by color)
- Moss Out!
- Common household cleaners
- Contact cement
- Surface cleaners
- Fuel stabilizers
- Turtle Wax
- Hand sanitizer
- Polyurethane
- Varathane
- Canned paint

Create the SDS notebook

Start by making a list of all the chemicals stored at your business. Include chemicals stored in vehicles and job trailers.

Acquire a current SDS notebook cover.

The first page must be a **table of contents**. This page does three things: 1) creates an inventory list of chemicals, 2) helps a person find the SDS for each chemical, and 3) displays the **date of the most recent review**.

When checking for compliance, Oregon OSHA is looking for this inventory list and the date of the last review.

Acquire Safety Data Sheets for each chemical on your list. These can be found online, often at a manufacturer's website.

Following that, how you organize the SDSs is up to you. They can be in alphabetical order, listed by building or work area, categorized by types of chemicals, or whatever makes sense for your business.

Your SDS manual can be electronic. If so, employees must have access to a device so they can look up SDS information at any time.

Maintain the notebook

Ensure this notebook contains a full and complete list of all chemicals at the business. What you need to include might surprise you.

Consider this a living document that must be continuously updated and reviewed.

Review the list every year and record the review date on the table of contents.

Your safety committee can coordinate or take on this responsibility; however, it can be performed by anyone.

Resources and rules at Oregon OSHA: bit.ly/4iiPlfb

If you stop using a chemical, remove the SDS from the manual, and retain it for 30 years for employee-health record purposes.

Train employees

All employees must be able to demonstrate that they know where the SDS notebook is and how to use it.

During a walk-through, Oregon OSHA will ask employees where the SDS notebook is located.

At minimum, employees need to be able to find and understand sections:

4 - First aid

8 - How the chemical enters the body

11 - Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Employees are required to have training before they work with chemicals, plus a yearly refresher training. Employers should keep training records.

Secondary containers

Any chemical moved from its original container to a secondary container must be properly labeled, and employees must know how to do it.

Secondary container labels must include:

- Chemical name
- Pictogram(s)
- Signal word

A drink container should never be used to store chemicals for any length of time, even if it is labeled.

