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HAZARD COMMUNICATION

The standard that gave workers the right to know, now gives them the right to understand.

[Safety & Health Topics Page: Hazard Communication](#)

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Highlights:

- [HCS / GHS Final Rule](#)
 - **Federal Register:** The Final Rule was filed on March 20th at the Office of the Federal Register and available for viewing on their Public Electronic Inspection Desk. The Federal Register published the final rule on March 26, 2012. The effective date of the final rule is 60 days after the date of publication.
 - [Federal Register](#) [PDF, 52 MB]
 - Comparison of Existing and Revised HCS
 - [Side-by-side](#)
 - [Redline Strikeout of the Regulatory Text](#)
- **Press Release:** US Department of Labor's OSHA publishes final rule to update the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS)
- Guidance
 - [OSHA Briefs](#) [PDF, 263 KB]
 - [Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Quick Cards](#)



Dr. David Michaels discusses the publication of the Final Rule for Hazard Communication

[Video](#) | [Statement](#)

"Exposure to hazardous chemicals is one of the most serious threats facing American workers today," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis. "Revising OSHA's Hazard Communication standard will improve the quality and consistency of hazard information, making it safer for workers to do their jobs and easier for employers to stay competitive."

The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) is now aligned with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). This update to the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) will provide a common and coherent approach to classifying chemicals and communicating hazard information on labels and safety data sheets. Once implemented, the revised standard will improve the quality and consistency of hazard information in the workplace, making it safer for workers by providing easily understandable information on appropriate handling and safe use of hazardous chemicals. This update will also help reduce trade barriers and result in productivity improvements for American businesses that regularly handle, store, and use hazardous chemicals while providing cost savings for American businesses that periodically update safety data sheets and labels for chemicals covered under the hazard communication standard.

Hazard Communication Standard

In order to ensure chemical safety in the workplace, information about the identities and hazards of the chemicals must be available and understandable to workers. OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) requires the development and dissemination of such information:

- Chemical manufacturers and importers are required to evaluate the hazards of the chemicals they produce or import, and prepare labels and safety data sheets to convey the hazard information to their downstream customers;
- All employers with hazardous chemicals in their workplaces must have labels and safety data sheets for their exposed workers, and train them to handle the chemicals appropriately.

Major changes to the Hazard Communication Standard

- **Hazard classification:** Provides specific criteria for classification of health and physical hazards, as well as classification of mixtures.
- **Labels:** Chemical manufacturers and importers will be required to provide a label that includes a harmonized signal word, pictogram, and hazard statement for each hazard class and category. Precautionary statements must also be provided.
- **Safety Data Sheets:** Will now have a specified 16-section format.
- **Information and training:** Employers are required to train workers by December 1, 2013 on the new labels elements and safety data sheets format to facilitate recognition and understanding.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q. [What is the Globally Harmonized System?](#)
- Q. [Why did OSHA decide to modify the Hazard Communication Standard to adopt the GHS?](#)
- Q. [What is the phase-in period in the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)

- Q. [What Hazard Communication Standard provisions are unchanged in the revised HCS?](#)
- Q. [How will chemical hazard evaluation change under the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [How will labels change under the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [What pictograms are required in the revised Hazard Communication Standard? What hazard does each identify?](#)
- Q. [Can I use a black border on pictograms for domestic shipment?](#)
- Q. [Will OSHA allow blank red borders?](#)
- Q. [When must label information be updated?](#)
- Q. [How will workplace labeling provisions be changing under the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [How is the Safety Data Sheet \(SDS\) changing under the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [Will TLVs be required on the Safety Data Sheet \(SDS\)?](#)
- Q. [May the International Agency for Research on Cancer \(IARC\) and the National Toxicology Program \(NTP\) lists be used to make carcinogen classifications?](#)
- Q. [Will the International Agency for Research on Cancer \(IARC\) and the National Toxicology Program \(NTP\) classifications be required on the Safety Data Sheet \(SDS\)?](#)
- Q. [How has OSHA addressed hazards covered under the current Hazard Communication Standard that have not been addressed by the GHS?](#)
- Q. [How has OSHA addressed pyrophoric gases, simple asphyxiants, and combustible dust?](#)
- Q. [How many businesses and workers would be affected by the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [What are the estimated overall costs for industry to comply with the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [What are the estimated benefits attributable to the revised Hazard Communication Standard?](#)
- Q. [I understand that the United Nations revises the GHS every two years. How will OSHA manage and communicate changes to the Hazard Communication Standard?](#)

[OSHA's Complete Set of Question and Answers](#)

[United Nations Economic Commission for Europe GHS Sub-committee](#)

[Provisional agenda for the twenty-third session](#)

Stakeholder meeting:

Preparations for the 23rd Session of the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and Stakeholder Input for the Regulatory Coordination Council (RCC)

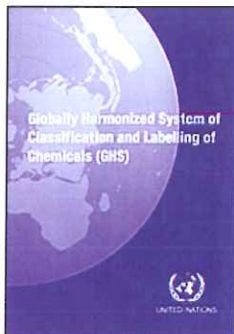
DATE: May 11, 2012, beginning at 10 a.m., in Washington, DC.

ADDRESS: The location for the public meeting is as follows: The U.S. Department of Labor, Francis Perkins Building, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20210, Room C5515

[Federal Register Notice](#)

OSHA WEB PORTAL

[Submit your comments](#) for the upcoming session of the GHS Sub-committee meeting here.



Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS)

- [Third revised edition](#)
- [Fourth revised edition](#)