



WHMIS

Quick Facts

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System



Education and Training Requirements

Education and training is essential to make the WHMIS system work. If you have WHMIS-controlled materials on your worksite then you must provide appropriate education and training.

As an employer, you are responsible for ensuring that employees have been appropriately trained **before** they work with controlled products.

WHMIS training has two aspects:

Education – understanding the principles of WHMIS, and the meaning of the information on labels and MSDSs; and

Workplace Specific Training – knowing how to work safely with hazardous materials at your work site.

Education

WHMIS Background

WHMIS and its purpose

Legislation for controlled products (federal, provincial, territorial)

Rights, responsibilities and roles of suppliers, employers, workers, joint health and safety committees, and occupational safety and health regulatory agencies

Controlled Products and Types of Exemptions

Definition of a controlled product

Which products require Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) and labels

Exemptions:

- **Partial** exemption for regulated products (e.g. consumer products, pesticides). WHMIS labels and MSDSs are not required, but WHMIS information and training are required.
- **Complete** exemption (e.g. for manufactured articles and products subject to the Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) Regulations)

WHMIS Classes and Hazards

The six WHMIS classes and their symbols

Hazards represented by each Class (including subdivisions of Classes B and D)

Labels

Supplier label – required elements

Workplace label

Other labels (e.g. coding for pipes, reaction systems, wastes)

Understanding the MSDS

Purpose of the MSDS

Required MSDS content and its significance:

- Potential hazards (health, fire, reactivity)
- Safe work procedures for storage and handling
- Emergency procedures
- First aid measures

Explanation of common terms on MSDSs (e.g. acute, chronic, Threshold Limit Value (TLV®))

Sources of additional information

Where to go for further information (e.g. on WHMIS, health effects of chemicals)

Where to go for assistance on enforcement

Workplace Specific Training

Train and educate workers on hazards and control measures applicable to their particular work area and duties. This training expands on the information provided on the MSDS.

Legislation for your jurisdiction and industry

WHMIS

Workplace occupational health and safety law

Other federal legislation (e.g. TDG, *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (CEPA))

Other provincial/territorial/municipal legislation

Controlled Products in your workplace

Workers must be able to:

- Identify the controlled products and understand their hazards
- Recognize warning properties and adverse health effects
- Access MSDSs and other in-plant information on controlled products

Specific Procedures for Controlled Products

Workers must understand:

- Safe procedures for storage, handling and disposal for the products that they work with
- Protective measures (including ventilation and other engineering controls; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE))
- Use and maintenance of PPE, if required
- Appropriate measures for fugitive emissions, hazardous wastes
- Warning systems (if control systems fail)
- Emergency procedures for fires, spills, and leaks

Training Tips for Employers

USE methods of instruction and evaluation appropriate for workers' language and literacy level

KEEP records of training and evaluations

USE workplace-specific MSDSs in training

CONSULT Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) Committee or Representative regarding WHMIS training, annually or if conditions change

PROVIDE additional training when MSDS information changes, when process or process controls change and when a new hazardous material is introduced

For additional information and resources, visit www.whmis.gc.ca and/or www.ccohs.ca

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