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How the Revised HazCom Standard Affects Your Industry

In March 2012, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) revised the Hazard Communication Standard which became effective May 25, 2012. The HazCom Standard requires that chemical manufacturers and importers evaluate the chemicals they produce or import and provide hazard information to downstream employers and employees by putting labels on containers and preparing safety data sheets. The revised standard is now consistent with the United Nation's Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals. Many countries already have some form of hazardous communication regulation and the differences in labeling and classification are significant enough between countries to lead to inconsistent protection of workers particularly when products are marketed in a different country of origin. The intent of GHS is to strengthen international efforts concerning the sound management of chemicals and protection of worker safety.

Changes to the HazCom Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) include:

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: The GHS does not address training. However, the proposed Hazard Communication Standard will require that workers are trained within two years of the publication of the final rule to facilitate recognition and understanding of the new labels and safety data sheets.

Matanzas can provide a review or audit of your internal HazCom program, and prepare and train your workforce on the new revisions.

Additional Information:

<http://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/ghs.html>

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=10099