

Hazard Communications

The purpose of hazard communications is to inform of the potential hazards of chemicals and other products. Understanding appropriate protective measures, maintaining containers, reading safety data sheets, and knowing proper cleanup and disposal methods is all part of ensuring employees are informed of the proper information and trained appropriately.

Within MSU, there are several documents and policies that have hazard communication elements within them. Read and understand about the ones that are applicable to your job tasks.

- **Hazardous Waste Guidance Manual** <https://www.ehs.msstate.edu/pdfs/hazardous.pdf> (as referenced in MSU policy 79.01 Hazardous Waste) This includes info on how to dispose items such as chemicals, used oil, fluorescent light bulbs and used oil.
- **Transportation of Hazardous Materials & Dangerous Goods**, MSU policy 79.09 <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/7909.pdf>
- **The Safe Shipping, Storage, and Handling of Pesticides and Other Agricultural Chemicals** <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policy/5607>
- **Chemical Hygiene Plan & Laboratory Safety Manual** <https://www.ehs.msstate.edu/pdfs/chemical.pdf>
- **Biosafety**, MSU policy 79.02 <https://www.policies.msstate.edu/policypdfs/7902.pdf>
- **Radiation Safety Manual** (as referenced in MSU policy 79.08) <https://www.ehs.msstate.edu/sites/www.ehs.msstate.edu/files/inline-files/Radiation%20Safety%20Manual%202021%20Revision%209%20DRAFT.pdf>

It is the responsibility of supervisors and lab principal investigators to communicate hazards to their workers and students this is not limited to, but should include safety data sheet information & access to them, hazards as mentioned in the above documents and policies, steps for preventions and emergency action plans.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

Chemical manufacturers/distributors of hazardous materials are required to provide SDS upon initial shipment, when updated, and upon request (also commonly found on their website). Have these SDS readily available for review and read and understand the SDS for products used within your work area.

Labels

All bottles, jugs, drums, tanks and other type containers should be clearly labeled with their contents and hazard warnings. If factory labels are missing or no longer legible, re-label the container with something such as a permanent marker, paint or other appropriate signage.

Spill Prevention & Control

To prevent accidental spills and pollution issues, proper precautions must be taken seriously:

- Keep containers closed when not in use (example - caps on tight, bung plugs in drums).
- Do not leave funnels in containers/tanks.
- Place drip trays under leaky machines/equipment.
- When maintenance is performed, all fluids should be caught in drain pans and properly disposed of or poured into appropriate tanks/drums by end of the day. If saving for later use, place in container that can be sealed to prevent spills.
- When re-fueling vehicles/equipment, never leave them unattended while pump is on.
- Keep hazardous chemicals and pesticides stored in secondary containment pans. Keep drain valve to tank containment dikes closed.
- Monitor containers for leaks or spills.

Having the ability to contain spills at or near their source helps minimize the potential for discharge into the outdoor ground or waters, or can prevent the spread of fire and flammable vapors, or can prevent health or physical hazards potentially resulting in a variety of bad scenarios. Spill controls is the key is preventing small accidents from becoming a danger to people, facilities, and the environment:

- In the event of injury or serious chemical exposure to a person contact 911 for medical assistance. Use the emergency eyewash and shower to remove contaminants as needed.
- Begin cleanup of the spilled material ONLY if you have proper personal protective equipment and can safely do so.
- Keep a spill containment kit nearby. Include items such as disposable gloves, absorbent mats/pillows/socks, containment barriers, absorbent granule material (oil dry) or any other such product that will help contain / cleanup the specific problem that could occur in the work area.
- Special control & cleanup precautions may be necessary for certain chemicals and situations; always read SDS before initial use to be prepared should a spill incident occur.

HOW TO REPORT A SPILL

<https://www.ehs.msstate.edu/focus-areas/hazardous-waste/spills-leaks>

All employees have the responsibility to notify their supervisor when any hazardous material spill occurs, or potential problem is recognized. Should anything more than a small spill occur contact MAFES/ES Risk Management or the MSU Hazardous Waste Officer or for assistance with cleanup response, guidance on proper waste disposal, and remediation.

The MSU Environmental Health & Safety department provides basic emergency training in spill response (~ 1 hour) on request and advanced hands-on training (8 & 24 hours) occasionally.