Chapter 7 – Pollution Prevention and Hazardous Substances

Fact-sheet - How to label the chemical products?

What is the objective?

The objectives of the label are to:

- **Allow** a clear and immediate identification of the chemical and its hazards;
- **Determine** the actions to be taken in case of accident or emergency.

The factory should request and try to select only chemical suppliers able to provide the GHS standardized label or the factory should take the initiative to adopt a standardized label to tag the chemicals on-site. The advantage is to harmonize the content and format of the label so it is easier to find and understand the information whatever is the chemical.

How to achieve this objective?

**Step 1: Make sure** it is written in your chemical purchase policy that the chemical supplier must provide the label with relevant information for each chemical supplied. The format of the label as per GHS should be:

- **Product identifier**: name and CAS number(s) – should match with the product identifier on the SDS
- **Signal word**: either use “Danger” (severe) or “Warning” (less severe)
- **Supplier identification**: name, address and contact of the chemical manufacturer or supplier
- **Hazard pictograms**: graphical symbols intended to convey specific hazard information visually*
- **Hazard statements**: description of the nature of the product’s hazards. e.g. “H317: May cause an allergic skin reaction”
- **Precautionary statements**: recommended measures to minimize or prevent the risks during exposure

*See, in the next page, the GHS hazard pictograms.

**Step 2: Control** if the label is available with all relevant information or not when a new chemical order is received.

**Step 3: Translate** the label in local language: product name, signal word, hazard statements and precautionary statements.

**Step 4: Make sure** the label in local language is visible and clearly readable for every chemical stored on-site.

**Step 5: Train** the employees to explain them how to read and how to understand the information on the label.

- **Appoint a manager** to control: original label received, label translated in local language and affixed on each product;
- **Develop a template for the local language label**: it is easier for the employees to refer to the same format.

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1 The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) is a system developed by the United Nations for standardizing and harmonizing the classification and labelling of chemicals globally. See [GHS information website](https://www.who.int/ Mediates)
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Common non-compliances

Hazard pictograms not up-to-date
In the picture on the right, the original label is showing the GHS hazard pictogram for “corrosive” but the factory has affixed a local language label with another hazard symbol corresponding to the older system for hazard identification (EU hazard symbols not to be used anymore since 2009).
See below the GHS hazard pictograms/symbols.

Original label not corresponding to the content of the container
When the chemical containers are sent back to the chemical manufacturer and re-used, it can happen that the original label might not be removed whereas the container is refilled with a different chemical. This leads to labeling problems and to potential hazards.

Additional information

GHS hazard pictograms:
(Source: http://www.reach-compliance.ch/ghsclp/ghspictograms/index.html)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GHS01</th>
<th>Danger / Unstable, Explosive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GHS02</td>
<td>Danger or Warning / Flammable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS03</td>
<td>Danger or Warning/ Oxidising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS04</td>
<td>Warning / Compressed gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS05</td>
<td>Danger or Warning / Corrosive cat. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS06</td>
<td>Danger / Toxic cat. 1 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS07</td>
<td>Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toxic cat. 4 / Irritant cat. 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower systemic health hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS08</td>
<td>Danger or Warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Systemic health hazards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHS09</td>
<td>Warning (for cat. 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(for cat. 2 no signal word) /Environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>