

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW Globally-Harmonized WHMIS

TRAINING

▶ THE RIGHT THING. THE RIGHT WAY.

Want to learn more about WHSC information and training resources? Visit our website or call us toll-free and ask to speak to a training service representative

**Workers Health
& Safety Centre**

Globally-Harmonized WHMIS

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

Canada's *Labour Code* and Ontario's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* provide workers a legal right to know about hazards on the job. Federal and provincial Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Regulations establish more specific provisions essential to the worker right to know. Now globally-harmonized, this system includes important elements for the classification of hazardous workplace products and communication on their safe use, storage, handling and disposal, as well as emergency procedures.

Chief vehicles for communicating hazardous product information are:

- ▶ Hazard class pictograms;
- ▶ Product labels;
- ▶ Safety data sheets (SDSs); and
- ▶ Worker training.

All are standardized by law with the exception of worker training. Although based on decades of experience, many believe standardized WHMIS training for workers, their supervisors and representatives is long overdue. Without quality training workers are often left vulnerable to a host of hazards that cause disability, disease and death.

Regardless, existing law includes a performance based requirement that WHMIS training "results in the workers being able to use the information to protect their health and safety". This is but one of many WHMIS-related, supplier and employer obligations set out in federal and provincial law.

Suppliers of a hazardous product must:

- ▶ Determine the classification of a hazardous product;
- ▶ Provide a label complying with specific requirements in English and French; and
- ▶ Provide SDSs in English and French.

Employers must:

- ▶ Ensure proper labelling of hazardous products;
- ▶ Ensure access to up-to-date SDSs for workers and other workplace parties;
- ▶ Provide worker training to ensure competence on the safe use of hazardous products and emergency procedures;
- ▶ Ensure this training is reviewed at least annually;
- ▶ Consult with joint health and safety committee or worker health and safety representative on training development, implementation, and review; and
- ▶ Take all additional and reasonable precautions to protect the safety and health of workers.

Post the reverse side of this WHMIS Poster in your workplace

The flip side of this Right to Know resource should be posted in a prominent location in your workplace as a reminder about the legal requirement to train workers so they are competent on the safe use of hazardous products.

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

Globally-Harmonized WHMIS

WHMIS HAZARD PICTOGRAMS

Environmental (aquatic) toxicity*

Flammable, self-reactive, pyrophoric, self-heating, emits flammable gas (in contact with water), organic peroxides

Serious eye damage, skin corrosion, corrosive to metals

Oxidizers (can burn without air)

Irritation, skin sensitizer, acute toxicity, target organ toxicity

Carcinogen, reproductive toxicity, respiratory sensitizer, target organ toxicity, mutagen, aspiration hazard

Self-reactive, organic peroxides

Gas under pressure

Acute toxicity (severe)

Biohazardous infectious materials

*optional

WHMIS Training Requirements

Employers have specific legal duties to ensure hazard information is effectively communicated to their workers. The provision of WHMIS training to all workers exposed or likely to be exposed to hazardous materials is an essential component of this duty.

This WHMIS training must be developed and implemented in consultation with the joint health and safety committee or representative.

If you answer no to any of the following questions you may need WHMIS training or WHMIS refresher training. Likely your existing workplace WHMIS program also needs to be reviewed.

	YES	NO
Can you name the three ways WHMIS information is shared?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand the WHMIS pictograms (opposite)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you name required signal words for workplace/product labels and explain their differences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know what a safety data sheet is?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know where you can find a safety data sheet in your workplace?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you been trained in the safe use, handling, storage and disposal of hazardous products?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know what to do in case of an accidental release or an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your workplace WHMIS program been reviewed in the last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Want to learn more?

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