

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL HANDLING/MSDS PROGRAM

Some of your workers may use hazardous materials (*e.g. paints solvent, oil, pesticide, fuel for machines*), whether they work in the office, shop, plant, or jobsite. Others may be exposed to them in a foreseeable emergency (*e.g. janitors working near a pipe that bursts*). These materials may be flammable/combustible liquids, compressed gases, explosive, organic peroxides, oxidizers, pyrophoric, unstable, toxic, water reactive, or health hazards. Some may cause immediate injury or illness upon contact; others may cause harm only after prolonged contact over the course of years.

To protect your workers from harm & yourself from injury/illness-related expenses, downtime, & missed deadlines, you should implement a Hazard Communication program (*HAZCOM*) which includes Material Safety Data Sheets (*MSDS*). This sheet addresses a few basics of a *HAZCOM* program & *MSDS*, but is not all-encompassing. Your local chapter of the National Safety Council or OSHA can provide more comprehensive information for your needs.

HAZCOM/MSDS basics include:

- Maintaining a list of the chemicals to which your workers are exposed (*walk through your premises & check your service vehicles to learn which chemicals are present*)
- Assigning responsible person(s) to obtain & maintain up-to-date *MSDS*, in English (*supplemental languages may be needed for workers who do not understand English*)
- Making up-to-date *MSDS* easily accessible to workers
- Designating responsible person(s) to ensure containers are labeled
Labeling or using other methods to identify contents & hazards of any chemical container (*including contents poured from shipping containers into smaller bottles for worker convenience*)
- Distributing a written copy of the *HAZCOM* program to each worker to inform them about the hazards of the chemicals & needed protective measures
- Training new, transferred, or temporary workers as well as contractors whose employees may work at your premises or jobsite in your *HAZCOM* program
- Training workers how to read *MSDS* (*so they understand the hazards, the protective equipment they may need, how to prevent a mishap, & what to do in case of mishap*) & where your *MSDS* can be found
- Refusing chemical samples from suppliers & others without accompanying *MSDS*
- Implementing a way of responding to & reporting mishaps (*e.g. first aid*)
- Keeping records of training

Gaslamp Insurance

739 4th Avenue, suite 206
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 238-4367
(619) 238-4387 fax
www.gaslampinsurance.com

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