

## HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD (HCS)

### THE HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD – YOUR “RIGHT-TO-KNOW”

In 1983, the Federal Government established the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) (29 CFR 1910.1200) “to ensure that the hazards of all chemicals produced or imported are evaluated, and that information concerning their hazards is transmitted to employers and employees.” The following five (5) key elements are outlined in the standard for compliance:

1. **Materials Inventory/Hazard Identification** – A list of the hazardous materials present in your work area.
2. **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)** – A detailed description of each hazardous material listed in the Materials Inventory.
3. **Labeling** – Containers of hazardous materials must have labels to identify the material and warn of its potential hazard to employees.
4. **Training** – All employees must be trained to identify and work safely with hazardous materials.
5. **Written Program** – A written program must be available to all employees.

In our previous newsletters, we have explained the requirements of the Hazard Communication Standard, identifying hazardous materials by taking an inventory, and its labeling requirement. You can view past newsletters on our website at [www.wright.edu/admin/ehs/](http://www.wright.edu/admin/ehs/). This newsletter insert will provide information for the **training** requirement.

## YOUR RIGHT-TO-KNOW TRAINING

### TRAINING DESCRIPTION

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) ([OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1200](https://www.osha-slc.gov/29-cfr-1910.1200)) is designed to protect against chemical source illnesses and injuries by ensuring that employers and employees are provided with sufficient information to recognize chemical hazards and take appropriate protective measures. HCS training introduces participants to material safety data sheets (MSDSs), labels, health information and the requirements of the Hazard Communication Standard. These are the tools that are used to help the employee recognize the hazards and exercise his or her “right to know” about the safe handling of chemicals in the laboratory and workplace.

Training available on the EHS website is designed to inform participants with:

- An **overview** of the requirements contained in the Hazard Communication Regulation ([OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1200](https://www.osha-slc.gov/29-cfr-1910.1200)), including employee's rights under the Regulation
- The ability to identify **operations in their work area** where hazardous chemicals are present
- The **location and availability** of the written hazard communication program, including the required list of hazardous chemicals, and MSDSs required by this standard

### GENERAL MODULES -- FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

The first four Modules cover topics that are common to all employees who fall under the HCS. The information is "portable," and can be carried from one work site or area where there are hazardous chemicals to any other work site or area.

- A. Hazard Communication -- Understanding the Standard
- B. Hazard Communication -- MSDSs (Material Safety Data Sheets)
- C. Hazard Communication -- Labels
- D. Hazard Communication -- Health Effects

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## CHEMICAL-SPECIFIC MODULES -- FOR SELECT EMPLOYEES

The remaining modules deal with categories of chemicals. These Modules should be used for hazard communication specific to the types of hazards associated with each category of chemical. They include:

- A. Hazard Communication -- Flammables
- B. Hazard Communication -- Corrosives
- C. Hazard Communication -- Reactives
- D. Hazard Communication -- Toxics

"**Toxics or Toxic Chemicals**," the last category, represents any substance whose main hazard characteristic is toxicity. Any of the substances that fall into the "**Flammables and Combustibles**," "**Corrosives**," and "**Reactive Chemicals**" groups can also be toxic. However, the main hazard characteristics in these groups are fire, chemical damage to living tissues, and reactivity, respectively.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### WHO MUST COMPLETE THIS TRAINING?

Any full, part-time and temporary employees who handle hazardous materials (i.e. chemicals) in a non-laboratory work setting must complete this training. Persons working in a laboratory setting will receive the information contained in the "General Modules" in the "Laboratory Safety Training." However, anyone can voluntarily complete the training at any time.

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### WHEN MUST INITIAL TRAINING BE COMPLETED?

- **Time of initial assignment.** The information and training must be specific to each work area. General as well as potential hazards must be covered
- **New physical or health hazard.** Sometimes new hazardous chemicals are introduced into the workplace, and sometimes employees are assigned to new jobs **that involve potential exposure** to new hazards. Either way, no employee should be in the position of encountering unfamiliar or unknown hazards
- **Transfer to another job or location**
- At a minimum, this training must be completed within 30 days of hire

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### HOW OFTEN MUST I COMPLETE A REFRESHER COURSE?

Hazard Communication / Right-To-Know Training is required at least **annually**.

## TRAINER CONTACT INFORMATION

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## RELATED LINKS – FOUND ON EHS WEBSITE

[Environmental Health & Safety Website](#)  
[Hazard Communication Program](#)  
[OSHA Hazard Communication Website](#)  
[Glossary of Terms Commonly Used on MSDSs and Labels](#)  
[Material Safety Data Sheets \(MSDSs\) -- Chemwatch](#)