

# Supervisors Safety

# Bulletin™

Training  
Toolbox



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## Exploring the new safety data sheets

### ■ What's changed, what's the same on this safety resource

**O**SHA has updated its rules for hazardous chemicals, and these rules will be in full effect in 2015. As a result, safety data sheets, a long-standing resource, are getting a facelift. Here's what you need to know now.

#### The resource

Safety data sheets (or SDS, formerly known as material safety data sheets) contain information on the storage, handling and properties of hazardous materials. They also instruct on what to do in case of an accident, emergency or spill.

Now that OSHA has updated its standards, these sheets are undergoing some changes.

#### Changes

The biggest change is that safety data sheets will now be standardized.

Each sheet will contain the same 16 sections that tell everything you need to know about a substance. The contents of these sections are:

- **Sections 1-8, General information.** This includes identifying the substance, safe handling and transportation, and emergency control measures.

- **Sections 9-11, Technical info.** These topics include information on the physical and chemical properties of the substance.
- **Sections 12-15, Non-OSHA.** Other regulatory agencies, such as EPA, will enforce these sections. But you should still have some familiarity with them.
- **Section 16, Other.** This section may include when the sheet was prepared or revised, as well as changes that have been made to it.

#### The same

The SDS may look new, but OSHA's stance on material safety hasn't changed.

Employers will still need to have SDSs available for workers to review.

This can be in a binder or on a computer terminal that can be accessed in the same area as the materials.

Most importantly: You still need to follow the instructions contained on these sheets at all times.

Consulting these sheets before using or transporting materials is key to preventing accidents and staying safe.



#### THE SDS SECTIONS

**B**elow are the 16 sections for each safety data sheet.

1. **Identification.** Product name, contact information and recommended uses.
2. **Hazards.** Danger indicators, including pictograms.
3. **Composition/information on ingredients.** The makeup of the material, including chemicals and additives.
4. **First-aid measures.** Steps for treating exposure.
5. **Fire-fighting measures.** Suitable equipment and specific fire hazards.
6. **Accidental release measures.** Steps for spills, leaks and releases, including clean-up and containment.
7. **Handling and storage.** Precautions for safe handling of material.
8. **Exposure controls/protection.** Covers appropriate PPE and exposure prevention.
9. **Physical and chemical properties.** Scientific characteristics of material.
10. **Stability/reactivity.** Includes conditions to avoid around the product (shock, vibration, etc.).
11. **Toxicological info.** Describes how exposure occurs and symptoms.
- 12-15. **Non-OSHA.**
16. **Other info.**

# Training Shop Quiz

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**1** The first eight sections of the new safety data sheets contain general information on the material.

true  false

**2** With changes to hazard communication standards by OSHA, employers no longer need to provide sheets for substances.

true  false

**3** Cleaning up spills, leaks and accidental releases of hazardous materials should be handled by the employee who spilled the material in the first place.

true  false

**4** The last section of the safety data sheet includes information not covered by the rest, including revisions and important dates.

true  false

**5** One key difference between new safety data sheets and material safety data sheets is that the new ones are standardized.

true  false

**6** Sections 12 through 15 of the new SDSs can be ignored.

true  false

**7** You should familiarize yourself with the new pictograms that will be displayed on hazardous materials information.

true  false

**8** Because the new rules aren't in effect yet, you don't need to worry about learning about SDSs for a few years.

true  false

**9** Workers will be responsible for writing and creating safety data sheets for every chemical or other hazardous material in the workplace.

true  false

**10** The new SDSs contain information on what types of PPE should be used when handling materials.

true  false

## ANSWERS

1. *True.* These sections include information on the substance, associated hazards and contact information for the manufacturer.
2. *False.* Workplaces still need copies of all SDSs readily available for employees.
3. *False.* There are different steps for dealing with any accident. These instructions are found in section 6.
4. *True.* This section may cover when the sheet was created or updated and what has changed between versions.
5. *True.* All SDSs will have information in the same places, making them easier to read at a glance.
6. *False.* While these sections aren't under OSHA's jurisdiction, workers should still read them over.
7. *True.* These pictures indicate the types of hazards posed by materials. All workers should examine them (available on the previous hazcom/GHS Training Shop).
8. *False.* The new hazard communication rules won't be in full effect until 2015, but OSHA requires that workers be trained on the new SDS format now.
9. *False.* These documents are created by manufacturers. It's your job to know and review the material on an SDS, however.
10. *True.* Basic PPE info can be found in section 8 of SDSs.

## IT'S FOR YOUR SAFETY



You may ask yourself why OSHA has changed safety data sheets at all. But it has good reason to.

The new system should be much easier to understand at a glance. As you become more acquainted with the sheets, you'll know where to look right away for essential safety information.

It's a small change, but one that could have a huge result: OSHA predicts the new hazcom standards will prevent 43 fatalities and 585 injuries and illnesses each year.