



HOW TO USE A MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET

The Material Safety Data Sheet, or MSDS, is written information that can help protect you from overexposure to chemicals you find on the job. MSDS is part of the D&Z NPS Hazard Communications Program. Each company can design its own MSDS form, and the sections may be in different order, but the basic information on any MSDS will be the same.

SECTION I. - CHEMICAL NAME: lists the identity of the substance (the name on the label), trade name, date the MSDS was prepared, name and address of the manufacturer, and usually a phone number for emergencies and more information.

SECTION II. - PHYSICAL DATA: describes many physical qualities of the chemical, and lets you know what's usual or safe. For example, how the chemical looks and smells; boiling and melting point (important in case a chemical might become a gas you could breathe); evaporation rate (known as percent volatile); how easily the chemical dissolves; and how heavy it is (tells you if it will sink, float, or dissolve in water).

SECTION III. - HAZARDOUS INGREDIENTS: includes the names of substances in the chemical that might be dangerous, and safe exposure limits such as the Permissible Exposure Limit or PEL (set by OSHA) or the Threshold Limit Value (TLV).

SECTION IV. - FIRE AND EXPLOSION DATA: tells you the lowest temperature when the chemical could catch fire ("flash point"). Lets you know if it's flammable (catches fire below 100 F) or combustible (catches fire above 100 F). Lists the best way to put out a fire involving that chemical.

SECTION V. - REACTIVITY DATA: describes what happens if this chemical comes in contact with air, water, or other chemicals. Describes conditions (like heat) or materials (like water) that can cause the chemical to react by burning, exploding, or releasing dangerous vapors. The chemical is called "incompatible" or "unstable" with these conditions or substances.

SECTION VI. - SPILL OR LEAK PROCEDURES: tells you what to use to clean up an accidental spill or leak, such as what protective equipment you might need to wear - respirator, gloves, safety goggles, etc. Also tells you how to dispose of the chemical safely.

SECTION VII. - HEALTH HAZARD DATA: lists the ways the chemical might enter your body, like splashing on your skin or being breathed in as vapor as well as possible symptoms of overexposure. Lets you know if overexposure might make existing medical conditions worse, and describes emergency first aid procedures.

SECTION VIII. - SPECIAL PROTECTION INFORMATION: explains special Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other equipment to use when working with the chemical, special procedures, extra health and/or safety information, signs that should be posted, and other information not covered in other sections.

SECTION IX. - SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS: lists any other special precautions to follow when handling the chemical. This may include what to have nearby to clean up a spill or put out a fire, and what safety signs to post near the chemical. This section also lists any other health and safety information not covered in any other part of the MSDS.