

Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

WHY THIS MATTERS

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) requires a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for every hazardous chemical on site. An SDS provides critical information on health hazards, first aid, PPE, storage and spill response. Failure to provide access to SDS is one of OSHA's top 10 most cited violations every year. If you don't read the SDS, you don't know the danger.

16

Standardized sections in every SDS (GHS format)

Top 10

SDS violations rank among OSHA's most cited every year

100%

Of hazardous chemicals on site must have an accessible SDS

5 Rules for Safety Data Sheets

Every worker who handles hazardous chemicals must know these rules:

- 1 KNOW WHERE THE SDS BINDER IS**
Every site must have SDS accessible to all workers at all times — know the location before you start.
- 2 READ BEFORE YOU USE**
Check Sections 2 (Hazards), 4 (First Aid), 7 (Handling/Storage) and 8 (PPE) before handling any chemical.
- 3 MATCH PPE TO THE SDS**
The SDS tells you exactly which gloves, respirator and eye protection are required — follow it.
- 4 KNOW FIRST AID FOR EACH CHEMICAL**
Section 4 tells you what to do for skin, eye, inhalation and ingestion exposure — read it in advance.
- 5 REPORT MISSING SDS IMMEDIATELY**
No SDS = no use. If a chemical arrives without an SDS, do not use it until one is obtained.

Before You Start — Quick Checklist

- Do you know where the SDS binder/station is?
- Have you read the SDS for today's chemicals?
- Are you wearing the PPE specified in SDS Section 8?
- Do you know the first-aid steps in SDS Section 4?
- Are all chemical containers properly labeled?
- Is the SDS collection up to date — no chemicals without one?

The 16 Sections of an SDS — Key Ones to Know

- Section 2 — Hazards:** Identifies the chemical's hazard classification, signal word (Danger/Warning) and pictograms.
- Section 4 — First Aid:** What to do for skin, eye, inhalation and ingestion exposure — read before an emergency happens.
- Section 7 — Handling:** Safe handling and storage conditions — incompatible materials, temperature limits, ventilation.
- Section 8 — PPE:** Tells you the exact gloves, respirator, eye/face protection and protective clothing required.
- Section 10 — Stability:** Conditions to avoid — heat, sparks, incompatible chemicals that could cause a reaction.
- Section 11 — Toxicology:** Health effects from short-term and long-term exposure — how the chemical can harm your body.

Common Mistakes That Put You at Risk

- ✗ Not reading the SDS before using a new chemical — you can't protect yourself from what you don't know
- ✗ Using the wrong PPE — checking the label isn't enough, the SDS Section 8 has the real answer
- ✗ Mixing chemicals without checking Section 10 — incompatible chemicals can react violently
- ✗ Assuming all cleaners are safe — many common products have serious inhalation or skin hazards

Safety Tips to Remember

- ✓ Read the SDS BEFORE you need it — not during an emergency with chemical on your skin
- ✓ If a container has no label, do not use it — label it, find the SDS, or dispose of it properly
- ✓ SDS must be available 24/7 — digital and paper copies both work, but workers must know where
- ✓ Train new workers on SDS access on day one — it's not optional, it's OSHA law

Discussion Questions for Your Team

1. Can you walk to our SDS binder right now and find a specific chemical?
2. What PPE does the SDS require for the chemicals you used today?
3. What would you do if a chemical splashed on your skin — do you know the SDS first-aid steps?
4. Are all our chemical containers labeled correctly?
5. Has anyone ever found a chemical on site with no SDS?

TOOLBOX TALK SIGN-OFF

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Project: _____

Location: _____

Attendance sheet attached: [] Yes