

GHS Updates & Hazcom 2025

The Globally Harmonized System (GHS) is now the system used to communicate hazards for chemicals. Basic information on the GHS integration to our Chemical Hygiene Plan (11.24 Chemical Identification and Labeling) are outlined on this handout.



GHS System:

The Globally Harmonized System (GHS) is an international approach to hazard communication, providing agreed criteria for classification of chemical hazards, and a standardized approach to label elements and safety data sheets. The system consists of the following:

- Hazard classification: Classification of health and physical hazards, and mixtures.
- Labels: Includes a harmonized signal word, pictogram, and hazard statement for each hazard category. Precautionary statements must also be provided.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS): May be electronic, hard copy, and/or smart phone applications.

Labeling:

- Pictogram: a symbol plus other graphic elements, such as a border, background pattern, or color that is intended to convey specific information about the hazards of a chemical. Each pictogram consists of a different symbol on a white background within a red square frame set on a point (i.e., a red diamond).
- Signal words: a single word used to indicate the relative level of severity of hazard and alert the reader to a potential hazard on the label. The signal words used are: "Danger" used for the more severe hazards, and "warning" used for less severe hazards.
- Hazard Statement: a statement assigned to a hazard class and category that describes the nature of the hazard(s) of a chemical.
- Precautionary Statement: a phrase that describes recommended measures to be taken which prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous chemical, or improper storage or handling of a hazardous chemical.
- Supplier Information: the name, address and telephone number of the manufacturer or supplier.

Hazard Communication policies help protect employees from the dangers of hazardous chemicals. They inform employees of chemical used in the workplace, the possible dangers when exposed, and how to protect yourself when using hazardous chemicals. A hazardous chemical is any chemical that is classified as a physical hazard or a health hazard. Physical hazards are chemicals that can cause a fire, explosion, or some other violent reaction when it encounters air, water, or other chemicals. Health hazards are chemicals that are harmful to a person's health by entering the body in through inhalation, skin contact, or ingestion or injection. These types of chemicals may cause short-term (acute) health problems and/or long-term (chronic) health problems, be toxic, be corrosive to the skin or eyes, cause cancer, birth defects, or reproductive issues, attack specific organs in the body or be harmful or deadly when inhaled. The UL Lafayette HazCom policy requires us to comply with the following five requirements: Develop a written HazCom program, Identify and create an inventory of all hazardous chemicals (completed every fall semester), Ensure each chemical container is properly labeled (should be checked in labs daily and documented on the Building Safety Inspection every quarter), Ensure SDS are easily accessible to all employees & Employee HazCom training program are completed.