062: MSDS

Discussion leader duties for this session:

Obtain a sampling of Material Safety Data Sheets for demonstration purposes during the discussion portion.

What this Safety Talk covers:

What crew members need to know about MSDS, and how best to use MSDS for their personal safety.

Discussion notes :

MSDS background

"MSDS" stands for "Material Safety Data Sheet." This choice of words is quite descriptive of the information these sheets provide you. They provide data essential to using the material safely. A product label supplies far less information.

Every chemical should have an MSDS.

MSDS applies primarily to chemicals, regardless of their form, but may apply to other materials also. If you refer to the Master MSDS for your project or your company, you can see which materials you need to take extra precautions with.

Materials that may harm you can be in liquid, solid, paste or gaseous form. These are in solvents, lubricants, and other materials you may need to use.

If a material does not have an MSDS, contact your foreman before using it. The particular material may not require an MSDS, or the MSDS may be missing. It's also possible for trade names on containers not to appear on the MSDS, though the MSDS should list both the generic name and any trade names. Do not use the material until authorized by your foreman, because you do not have enough information to use it safely.

Part of the MSDS initiative is that employees receive HazCom training, which communicates to you what you need to know about safely working with hazardous materials per your company's policies.

What's on the product label

- The name of the material (obviously), and the name of its manufacturer.
- A hazard warning, if applicable.
- What part or parts of your body the material could affect.
- Precautions for safe use and storage.

What's on the data sheet

- Ingredients.
- Physical data, such as boiling point, specific gravity, percent volatile, and viscosity.
- Fire and explosion hazards.
- Reactivity data.
- Environmental information, including spill response and recommended disposal.
- Suggested first-aid.
- Precautionary information.
- Health hazard data.

HazCom training covers

- Understanding the hazards of each material or chemical you may use, and how to use them safely.
- Spill and clean-up procedures.

Review and Discussion

What does "MSDS" mean?

What should every chemical have?

What if a chemical doesn't have an MSDS associated with it?

Where might you find hazardous chemicals on this job, and what might some of them be?

Pick one of the chemicals from the last question, and determine what precautions should you take with it.

What are some things you'll find on a product label?

How does the product label information differ from the MSDS information?

If you need to know what materials a solvent will react with, where would you find this information?

Where will you find contact information regarding a given chemical?

What are some important things you need to know about a chemical before its use?

- Emergency and first-aid procedures.
- Whom to contact for more information.
- How your company's hazardous materials system works.

Important things to know about a chemical

- What are the safe exposure levels?
- What are the first-aid procedures?
- What precautions should I take?
- What should I do if there is a spill or leak?
- If it catches fire, what should I use to put out the fire?
- Are there situations where this chemical should not be used, or are there materials that it should not come in contact with?

Participant's Signature and Date