



Australian Government

Comcare



GHS— What you need to know

WHAT IS THE GHS?

The *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals*, or GHS, is a United Nations initiative to internationally standardise chemical classification, labelling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) in the workplace.

Australia* adopted the GHS under work health and safety laws on 1 January 2012 with a five year transition period for full implementation by 1 January 2017.

The GHS replaces the *Approved Criteria for Classifying Hazardous Substances* [NOHSC: 1008(2004)] for workplaces. The changes include using a common set of pictograms, signal words, hazard statements and precautionary statements for labels and SDS to communicate information about a chemical. The GHS covers physical, health and environmental hazards.

This fact sheet will tell you what you need to know and do to become GHS ready.

TRANSITION PERIOD

Australia adopted the third revised edition of the GHS with the introduction of the work health and safety laws. There is a five year transition period until 31 December 2016 and during this period both the old and new systems for chemical classification can be used. After this date, on 1 January 2017, SDS and labels must be GHS compliant although inventory already in the supply chain, labelled under the Approved Criteria, may continue to be consumed. The following changes would apply to chemicals manufactured or imported post 1 January 2017:

Up to 31 December 2016	From 1 January 2017
<i>Approved Criteria for Classifying Hazardous Substances</i> NOHSC:1008 (2004) OR the GHS	Workplace chemical classification, labels and SDS under <i>Third Edition GHS</i>
<i>National Code of Practice for the Preparation of Material Safety Data Sheets</i>	<i>Code of Practice for the Preparation of Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals</i>
<i>The National Code of Practice for the Labelling of Workplace Substances</i> NOHSC:2012 (1994)	<i>Code of Practice for the Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals</i>
ADG Code for chemicals in transit	ADG Code for chemicals in transit

TRANSPORT OF CHEMICALS

The *Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail* (the ADG Code) will continue as is. Under Australian Work Health and Safety Laws, GHS pictograms may be substituted with correct ADG class labels where both the GHS pictogram and ADG class label represent the same hazard. The law requires certain placarding on the truck or train and at the entrance to a facility where dangerous goods are stored. The *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* (WHS Regulations) do not apply to the transport of hazardous chemicals by road, rail or sea. However, GHS labelling is suitable on internal packaging for goods in transit, since once they arrive for use at the facility the WHS Regulations apply.

*Application in Western Australia, Australian Capital Territory and Victoria will differ



WHAT ARE THE CHANGES?

The key changes for users of chemicals will be Safety Data Sheets (SDS) replacing Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), the presence of pictograms classifying hazardous chemicals and new warning information on labels:

GHS symbols and abbreviated meanings

	Acute toxicity via oral, dermal or inhalation		Explosives, self-reactive substances, organic peroxides		Flammable, pyrophoric, self-heating substances; water reactive
	Oxidising substances, Organic peroxides		Hazardous to the environment, aquatic toxicity		Corrosive, skin damage, eye damage
	Aspiratory or respiratory hazard, carcinogenicity, mutagenicity		Compressed, liquefied or dissolved gases		Acute toxicity, skin irritation, eye irritation, skin sensitisers

The new labels will now have:

A **Signal word**: This indicates the severity of the hazard. Warning is used for less severe hazards while Danger means severe hazards.

A **Pictogram**: A pictogram is a symbol that is intended to quickly convey special information about the hazards of chemicals. It is a black symbol on a white background within a red diamond.

A **Hazard Statement**: This brief and to-the-point message describes the nature of the hazard, such as 'Fatal if swallowed'.

A **Precautionary Statement**: Here's where you'll learn how to respond in case of exposure and/or how to store the chemical properly.

Product identifier, identity and proportion of each ingredient and **contact details of the Australian manufacturer or importer** complete the label information.

Bringing it all together a GHS Label and SDS may look like these:

Aromasol

Refer to Safety Data Sheet before use.

Contains:
Aromatic hydrocarbons 95%v/v
Toxicole 5%v/v

2.5 L

DANGER





Highly flammable liquid and vapour

Toxic if swallowed

Causes skin irritation

May cause cancer

May be fatal if swallowed and enters airways

IF ON SKIN (or hair): Take off contaminated clothing and wash before re-use. Rinse skin using plenty of soap and water. **IF exposed or concerned:** Get medical advice/attention. **IF SWALLOWED:** Immediately call a POISON CENTRE or doctor/physician. Do NOT induce vomiting. Store locked up in a well-ventilated place. Keep cool. Dispose of contents/container in accordance with local regulations.

In case of fire: use powder for extinction. Keep away from sparks and open flames—No smoking. Keep container tightly closed. Ground/bond container and receiving equipment. Take precautionary measure against static discharge. Wear protective gloves and eye and face protection. Wash hands thoroughly after handling. Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product.

Madeup Chemical Company Pty Ltd, 999 Chemical Street, Chemical Town, My State 12344; Tel: 1300 000 000
 www.madeup-chemicalcompany.com.au

Product Identifier

Identity and proportion of each ingredient

Signal Word

Hazard Statements

Pictograms

Precautionary Statements

Contact details of Australian Manufacturer or Importer

For Safety Data Sheets (SDS), the key change from Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) is in Sections 2 and 3, otherwise the 16 header format and sections remain very similar.

SAFETY DATA SHEET

1. IDENTIFICATION: PRODUCT IDENTIFIER AND CHEMICAL IDENTITY

Product name: Aromasol

CAS number: 121-21-2

Recommended use: Laboratory chemical

Restrictions on use: No known restrictions

Manufacturer details: Madeup Chemical Company Pty Ltd
999 Chemical Street
Chemical Town
My State 1234
Telephone: 1300 000 000

Emergency telephone number: Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26

2. HAZARD(S) IDENTIFICATION

GHS classification: Flammable liquid category 2
Acute toxicity category 3 (ingestion)
Skin corrosion/irritation category 2
Carcinogenicity category 1A
Aspiration hazard category 1

Pictograms:



Signal word: Danger

Hazard statements: H225: Highly flammable liquid and vapour
H301: Toxic if swallowed
H315: Causes skin irritation
H350: May cause cancer
H304: May be fatal if swallowed and enters airways

Precautionary statements:

Prevention P210: Keep away from sparks and open flames—
No smoking
P233: Keep container tightly closed.
P240: Ground/bond container and receiving equipment.
P243: Take precautionary measures against static discharge.

The remaining precautionary statements would be found on the following page

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DANGEROUS GOOD AND A HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL?

Dangerous goods are substances, mixtures or articles that pose an immediate hazard to people, property or the environment and require special handling during transport; the dangerous goods laws include rules governing safe packing, labelling and emergency response in the event of an accident. Dangerous goods symbols are used only for transport and to alert parties to the presence of dangerous goods at the entrance to a facility, bulk storage units at a worksite and dangerous goods store rooms.

Hazardous chemicals may also be substances, mixtures and articles that can pose a health or physical hazard to humans directly. The health or physical hazards that may arise from exposure to a hazardous chemical in the workplace are communicated through label information and GHS pictograms.

A dangerous goods symbol may replace a GHS pictogram on a label where the same hazard is represented.

HOW DO I KNOW IF WHAT I HAVE IS A HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL?

Manufacturers and importers of chemicals are responsible for determining if their chemical is hazardous and, if so, they must prepare labels and a SDS. If an end user has a chemical and they are not sure if it is hazardous they should first isolate the chemical from use then contact the manufacturer, importer or supplier of the chemical for information.

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) at a workplace which uses, handles or stores hazardous chemicals must, amongst other duties, ensure that:

- > all hazardous chemicals are correctly labelled
- > SDSs applying to the inventory of hazardous chemicals are obtained, updated and made accessible
- > SDS are reviewed for storage incompatibilities
- > a register of hazardous chemicals at the workplace is provided and maintained
- > health monitoring is undertaken where a significant risk of exposure for a worker exists, and
- > information, training, instruction and/or supervision is provided to workers who may be exposed to hazardous chemicals.

WILL I NEED TO RELABEL THE CHEMICALS I USE AT WORK ON 1 JANUARY 2017?

No, end users of hazardous chemicals are still able to use, handle and store inventory holdings of hazardous chemicals labelled in accordance with the previous labelling code where that inventory existed in the supply chain before 1 January 2017.

PCBUs should, however, plan for their transition to full implementation of the GHS. From 1 January 2017 end users of hazardous chemicals may continue to accept pre-existing stock from suppliers labelled under the Approved Criteria until inventory in the supply chain is exhausted.

WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS NO CURRENT SDS?

Manufacturers and importers of hazardous chemicals are required to review safety data sheets at least once every five years, however, sometimes a chemical manufacturer may go out of business and the SDS review process stops. If this is the case PCBUs are encouraged to look for alternative sources of information, including generic type SDS, where the hazard and precautionary statements for the mirror ingredients will apply in their circumstance.

WHAT ABOUT DISHWASHER GRANULES?

Hazardous chemicals that are consumer products used in the workplace, in a manner consistent with household use, are exempt from GHS labelling requirements.

When consumer products are stored, handled or used in the workplace in a manner that is not consistent with household use then they should be labelled in accordance with the GHS; for example, consumer products in bulk quantities that need to be repackaged for end use would need workplace labelling. Similarly, any ingredient being used in the manufacture of such a consumer product would also require workplace labelling.

Consumer products used in a manner consistent with household use would not need to be included in a hazardous chemical register.

WHAT SHOULD A PCBU DO TO PREPARE FOR THE GHS?

To prepare for transition to full GHS by the compliance date of 1 January 2017 PCBUs should:

- > identify their organisation's deadlines—work backwards from 31 December 2016
- > develop an implementation schedule suitable for the needs of their workplace
- > review inventory holdings and use non-compliant stock first
- > ensure procurement processes support the supply of GHS compliant stock
- > review new SDS to confirm the hazardous nature of the chemical which may involve new controls
- > update systems; risk assessments, chemical registers and response plans, and
- > train and/or inform your workers on the new labels and SDS.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Further information is available at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au or visit the GHS information page on the Comcare website.