



## Considerations for Hazard Communication Plans, Programs & Trainings

Basically, the Hazard Communication ([Haz-Com](#)) OSHA standard states that employees have the [right to know](#) what chemicals are in their workplace, how to use them correctly, and what to do if they have bodily contact with the chemical. You also must have a written plan that outlines how your organization will fulfill each of those items. You can use the [Hazard Communication Plan](#) as a template. Here are some basics from the plan:

### Informing Employees:

There are three ways to inform employees of the chemicals in their workplace: [container labeling](#), direct training and [Safety Data Sheets](#) (SDS). All three of these must be used.

- **Label** all containers with what is inside. This includes every squirt bottle used for gym or child care disinfectant, even the ones that just say “water.”
- **Train** your employees immediately at hire on any chemicals they are required to use, like pool chemicals and equipment disinfectant. Some employees, such as maintenance staff, will need more training than others. When a new chemical is introduced, you must train on that as well. The manufacturer will provide you information, and if there is a company sales representative (often the case with aquatic chemicals), they can give your employees training.
- **SDS** are 16 page documents that provide information about a chemical; from its scientific make-up to how to clean up a spill. The Hazard Communication Standard ([HCS](#)) requires chemical manufacturers, distributors, or importers to provide Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) (formerly known as Material Safety Data Sheets or MSDSs) to communicate the hazards of hazardous chemical products. As of June 1, 2015, the HCS will require new SDSs to be in a [uniform format](#). SDS are available from the manufacturer (most will send with each order), or on the Internet. Keep SDS in a clearly labeled notebook, sorted by name and in an easily accessible location such as the reception desk. It is also a good idea to post the specific SDS where chemicals are used or stored. An SDS must be available for each hazardous chemical on-site. Employers must ensure that SDSs are readily accessible to employees.

### What to do in case a person has bodily contact with a chemical:

Most importantly, ensure that staff is using chemicals with proper [personal protective equipment](#) (PPE) to prevent inappropriate contact with chemicals. If contact occurs, remember two basic strategies:

- If the chemical comes into contact with skin or eyes, wash the area with clean running water for at least 15 minutes. Put the person in the shower or use a hose (if you're outside). Seek medical treatment if necessary. (Check with your local OSHA authority for information on [eye wash stations](#).)
- If the chemical is ingested follow the SDS instructions for first aid treatment(s). Call [Poison Control](#) and seek medical treatment as necessary.

More information is available at the Safe-Wise Consulting [Online Resource Library](#).