

November 2017

## Safety data sheets in the workplace

### KEY FACTS

You need to get a safety data sheet (SDS) for every hazardous substance when it is first supplied to your workplace. This includes when the substance is supplied to your workplace:

- for the first time in the last five years
- for the first time after any changes to its SDS.

The following people need to be able to access the SDS (or a condensed version of its key information) when they need it:

- workers in their work areas
- emergency service workers
- anyone else likely to be exposed to the substance in the workplace.

Don't lock the SDS away, and make sure that the people listed above know where to find it and can access it easily and immediately when they need it.

Make sure your workers understand how to use an SDS.

You can also make a condensed version of the SDS available to your workers and emergency service workers, containing key information:

- about the product
- about emergency response and first aid
- about storing the substance and keeping it away from incompatibles
- any other essential safety information about the product.

Workers can also use a condensed version when moving between different workplaces that belong to the same business.

## Introduction

Safety data sheets help protect people in the workplace by providing key information about hazardous substances to the people who handle, use or store them or who could be exposed to them.

This guide tells you about your duty to have an SDS for each hazardous substance in your workplace and to make it available to workers and emergency service workers.

It also describes the condensed version of the key information from an SDS, which you can make available to workers and emergency service workers.

### 'You' – the PCBU

This guide is written for persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) as they are responsible for obtaining an SDS for every hazardous substance in the workplace. In this guide, 'you' means the PCBU.

This guide may also be useful for workers who want to learn more about the SDS.

In simple terms, the PCBU is an individual or a company carrying on a business, but it can also be other types of organisation. More information on the PCBU and other duty holders in the workplace and their duties is available on our website:

[www.worksafe.govt.nz](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz)

## What is an SDS?

An SDS provides detailed information about a hazardous substance. The format and content required on an SDS is set out under the Hazardous Substances (Safety Data Sheets) Notice 2017. This information is under 16 headings, and includes details about:

- the product (eg hazard identification, composition and ingredients, physical and chemical properties, stability and reactivity)
- how to respond to emergencies (eg first aid, firefighting recommendations and measures to control spills)
- using, handling, storing, transporting and disposing of the product
- how to protect people and the environment (eg exposure limits and controls to prevent exposure, recommended personal protective equipment, toxicological and ecological information)
- regulatory requirements such as compulsory controls for the substance, approval number under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO).

## When do you need an SDS?

You must obtain an SDS for every hazardous substance when the manufacturer, supplier or importer first supplies it to your workplace. This includes if five years have passed since a substance was last supplied to your workplace, or when a substance is supplied for the first time after any changes to its SDS.

It is your responsibility to have an SDS. If the supplier does not supply the SDS with the substance, or if you don't have an SDS for a hazardous substance at your workplace, ask your supplier for one. The supplier has a duty to provide a compliant SDS for every substance they supply to your workplace.

Keep track of when you first receive a substance, so that you can obtain a new SDS if it has been five years since you last received the substance.

When a supplier supplies a substance to your workplace, ask if there have been any changes to the SDS. If an SDS for a substance changes, you will need a new one.

It is always a good idea to have an SDS (or at least a condensed version of its key safety information), even if you are not required to have one. There is more information on condensed versions at the end of this guide.

## When don't you need an SDS?

You **don't** need an SDS for:

- hazardous substances in transit
- consumer products that you are going to supply to another workplace without opening
- consumer products that you use in the workplace as you would at home
- anhydrous ammonia contained in equipment where it is used as a refrigerant, except where the quantity of anhydrous ammonia exceeds 100 kg.

In the above cases, you must still make information about safe use, handling, and storage of the hazardous substances readily accessible to workers in the areas where they work. One way to do this is by using product safety cards containing the basic safety information.

When transporting dangerous goods, you need to follow the Land Transport Rule: Dangerous Goods 2005, which specifies the information that needs to be carried when transporting dangerous goods.

For more information about the rules for transporting dangerous goods and transporting dangerous goods as tools of trade, see the New Zealand Transport Agency website: [www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/factsheets/64](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/factsheets/64)

## Making the information accessible

You must make the SDS (or a condensed version) 'readily accessible' to:

- workers who work with or near hazardous substances
- emergency service workers who could be exposed to the substance in an emergency at your workplace
- anyone else who could be exposed to the hazardous substance at your workplace.

### WHAT DOES 'READILY ACCESSIBLE' MEAN?

'Readily accessible' means a person can easily obtain the SDS, or the condensed version in hard or electronic copy or any other form, whenever they need it.

When thinking about whether these documents are readily accessible, ask yourself:

- Do workers know where to find them, and is it easy to locate the specific SDS/condensed version if you keep several in the same place?
- How far are they from where workers work with the hazardous substances?
- If you keep them electronically, do workers know how to access them?
- Are there restrictions to workers accessing the place where you keep them?
- If they are on board a vehicle, do workers know where to find them?
- In an emergency, could there be obstacles to getting to them?
- Could access be blocked in different emergencies?
- Who else in the workplace could be exposed to the substance and how will they access the SDS/condensed version?

## Understand the SDS and make sure workers understand it

Read and understand each SDS yourself so that you know the harm that the hazardous substances at your workplace can cause and how to protect your workers.

It is also a good idea for you to understand the SDS so that you can explain it to workers or help them understand it.

An SDS can be difficult to understand, particularly for people who have trouble reading or who speak English as a second language.

It is your responsibility to take the time to explain the SDS to your workers or ask someone else who has the necessary knowledge and skills to explain it to them.

Don't leave workers to read the SDS/condensed version on their own. Ask them:

- Do they understand it?
- Are there parts of it they need you to explain?
- Do they understand the health and safety measures on the SDS/condensed version?

A product safety card with the key safety information listed below is a good way to provide this key information.

## Condensed versions

Instead of the SDS, you can make a condensed version of its key information readily accessible:

- to workers in their work areas in their workplaces
- to emergency service workers or anyone else likely to be exposed to the hazardous substance in the workplace
- to workers who travel between workplaces because their work takes place in more than one location, so that they can immediately obtain the key safety information from the SDS in an emergency.

A condensed version of the key information from the SDS can also be provided instead of the full SDS to meet the requirement to provide an SDS with the inventory.

## What's in a condensed version?

The key information on a condensed version of an SDS should include:

- the substance name including its trade name (see Section 1 of the SDS)
- the hazards of the substance including the associated hazard pictograms (available from <https://www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/pictograms.html>)
- **either** its HSNO classifications (eg 3.1A - flammable liquids, 6.1E acute toxicity)
- **or** hazard statements from the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) (eg extremely flammable liquid and vapour, causes mild skin irritation), which are likely to be more meaningful to workers
- precautions for using the substance:
  - GHS precautionary statements (see Section 2 of the SDS)
  - handling and storage requirements, including incompatibilities (see Sections 7 and 10 of the SDS)
  - warnings (eg keep away from ignition sources)
  - engineering controls, such as ventilation, emergency showers and eyewashes (see Section 8 of the SDS)
- safety equipment, in other words, the specific types of personal protective equipment (PPE) that are required (see Section 8 of the SDS)
- emergency responses:
  - first aid instructions (see Section 4 of the SDS)
  - fire-fighting measures and decomposition products (see Section 5 of the SDS)
  - spill containment and clean up measures (see section 6 of the SDS)
  - emergency contact numbers (see section 1 of the SDS)
  - disposal methods following a spill (see Section 13 of the SDS).

Some companies produce information sheets with key substance information (sometimes called product safety cards). If you use these information sheets, make sure you **ALSO** include any key information listed above that is not on these sheets.

## Condensed key safety information

(Example only)

### 91 OCTANE PETROL (REGULAR)

3.1A 6.1E 6.3B 6.7B 9.1B



#### Danger

- Highly flammable liquid and vapour.
- May be fatal if swallowed and enters airways.
- Causes mild skin irritation.
- Suspected of causing cancer.
- Toxic to aquatic life with long-lasting effects.

#### Precautions

- NO SMOKING.
- KEEP AWAY FROM IGNITION SOURCES (eg heat, sparks, open flames).
- Read label and SDS before use.
- Use PPE as required. Wear protective gloves. Wear eye or face protection.
- Use explosion-proof electrical, ventilating and lighting equipment and only non-sparking tools. Take precautions against static discharge.
- Keep container tightly closed.
- Keep out of reach of children.
- Do not release into environment, drains or water courses.

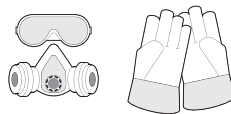
#### Handling

- Wear PPE to prevent inhalation, skin and eye exposure.
- Handle and use in well-ventilated areas away from sparks flames and other ignition sources.
- Never siphon by mouth.
- Have emergency equipment for fires, spills, leaks readily available.
- Work from suitable, labelled fire resistant containers.
- Open containers carefully, they may be under pressure.

#### Storage

- SEPARATE FROM OXIDISING MATERIALS.
- Store in a segregated approved area.
- Store in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place away from ignition sources, strong acids, clothing and foodstuffs.
- Keep containers closed when not in use, securely sealed and protected against physical damage. Check containers for damage or leaks.
- Keep suitable fire extinguishers in and near the storage area.
- Provide eye wash and general washing facilities.
- Provide exhaust ventilation. Where vapours or mists are generated, use a flameproof exhaust ventilation system.

### Personal protective equipment



- Wear nitrile gloves with chemically resistant inner gloves and chemical splash goggles.
- Wear cotton overalls buttoned at neck and wrist for light, superficial contamination that will not reach skin.
- Wear anti-static overalls, boots and gloves.
- Wear chemical resistant apron and/or impervious chemical suits and boots if large quantities handled or if there is a risk of spillage.
- Wear chemical safety glasses or full-face shield to protect against splashes.
- Use respiratory protection if there is insufficient ventilation.

#### First aid

Get medical advice/attention in case of exposure or if concerned. Have product container or label at hand when seeking medical advice.

**Inhalation:** If inhaled, remove affected person from contaminated area. Keep at rest until recovered. If symptoms persist, seek medical attention.

**Ingestion:** DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING. Immediately call poison centre or doctor.

**Eyes:** Flush with water for at least 15 minutes. Check for and remove contact lenses. Hold eyelid away from eyeball. Seek medical attention.

**Skin:** Flush with water for at least 15 minutes. Remove contaminated clothing. Wash before reuse or discarding. If symptoms develop or irritation occurs, seek medical attention.

#### Fire fighting measures – call 111

- Total protection required including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) in enclosed areas or in close proximity to fire. Fight fire from safe location.
- DO NOT USE WATER JET. Use foam, fine water spray and dry chemical powder.
- Fire fighters: wear SCBA in positive pressure and full PPE to prevent exposure to vapours or fumes.
- Use water spray to cool down heat-exposed containers.
- **HAZCHEM Code 3YE**

#### Spill containment, clean up, disposal

- Remove ignition sources. Evacuate unprotected personnel.
- If possible contain the spill. Place inert absorbent, non-combustible material onto spillage.
- Do not allow material for absorbing spillages to accumulate – dispose of appropriately.
- Avoid dispersal of spilt material and runoff and contact with soil, waterways, drains and sewers.
- Dispose of safely, according to local and regional council rules. Use a licensed contractor.

SEE SDS No.: 0000xxxx.

**Emergency phone number:** 0800 xxx xxx

**National Poisons Centre:** 0800 764 766

**Technical Helpline:** xx xxx xxxx

## Further information

More information about training, hazardous substances, and other workplace health and safety matters is available on the WorkSafe website: [www.worksafe.govt.nz](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz)

The Hazardous Substances Toolbox has specific tools for workplaces that use, handle, manufacture and store hazardous substances. Visit: [www.hazardoussubstances.govt.nz](http://www.hazardoussubstances.govt.nz)

## Abbreviations

TERM	DEFINITION
GHS	Globally Harmonised System
HSNO	Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996
PCBU	Person conducting a business or undertaking
PPE	Personal protective equipment
SCBA	Self-contained breathing apparatus
SDS	Safety data sheet