pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY
BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

PATHS
PA Training for Health & Safety
Accident Prevention Through Education

:: Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) Facts ::

Categories

The information on an MSDS is typically grouped into these categories:

- Hazard ratings, such as NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) ratings.

- Name and address of the material's manufacturer or importer.

- Identity; by common name, synonyms, and chemical abstract number of the material.

- Physical and chemical characteristics, such as the material's appearance, odor, specific gravity and melting point.

- Fire and explosion data, such as the material's flash point, explosion hazards and recommended fire extinguishing media.

- Physical hazards, such as the material's stability, incompatible material information and hazardous decomposition products.

- Health hazards, such as inhalation and ingestion hazards, carcinogen classification and basic first-aid information.

- Special precautions and spill or leak procedures, such as storage, clean-up and disposal information.

- Special protection information, such as personal protective equipment recommendations.

Terms

Material safety data sheets have some terms you may not be familiar with, such as the specific gravity or flash point of a material. To help familiarize you and assist in your understanding of terms used on a MSDS, general information can be found at the following website: http://www.ehso.com/msdsdefs.php.

Other Information about MSDSs

- Material safety data sheets are supposed to be supplied by the manufacturer or distributor of a hazardous material.

- Information on a material safety data sheet should not be changed or otherwise altered by employees, except with written permission from the manufacturer of the product.

- Questions about specific information provided on a MSDS should be addressed to the manufacturer of the product (name, address and contact information are contained in the "identity" section of the MSDS).

- MSDSs should be used to appropriately label all unlabeled hazardous-material containers to properly identify the product inside and the health hazards associated with the product.

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