

WHS OP029 Hazardous Chemical Labelling Procedure

Section 1 - Overview

(1) The purpose of labelling is to ensure that the contents of a container can be readily identified by product name, and to provide basic information about the contents of the container such as its ingredient(s), hazards and precautions for safe use.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This procedure ensures the regulatory requirements for labelling hazardous chemicals are met according to:

- a. The Work Health and Safety Act (NSW) 2011; and
- b. The Work Health and Safety Regulation (NSW) 2017.

(3) The requirements of the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling (GHS) are also incorporated in this procedure.

(4) The procedure applies to all University Workers.

Section 3 - Procedure

(5) Implementation of Work Health and Safety (WHS) regulations has brought hazardous substances and dangerous goods under the one classification system, jointly referred to as "Hazardous chemicals". The classification is based on the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling Chemicals (GHS).

(6) The GHS has replaced the classification and hazard communication systems for workplace hazardous substances and dangerous goods, including risk phrases, safety phrases and class diamonds. Replacements include GHS signal words, pictograms and hazard statements for each GHS hazard class and category covered by the WHS Regulations and are defined as follows:

- a. Hazard Statement: a descriptor assigned to a hazard class or hazard category describing the nature of the hazards of a chemical including and if appropriate, the degree of the hazard. A hazard statement replaces the R-phrase.
- b. Hazard Pictogram: a graphical composition, including a symbol plus other graphical elements, that is assigned to a hazard class or hazard category.
- c. Precautionary Statement: describes the recommended measures that should be taken to minimise or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to, or improper storage or handling of a hazardous chemical. The precautionary statement replaces the S-phrase.
- d. Signal Word: if a hazardous chemical has a severe hazard, the label includes the signal word "Danger". In the case of less severe hazards, the signal word is "Warning".

(7) Refer to the Safe Work Australia poster Work Health and Safety Regulations: Classification and labelling for workplace hazardous chemicals.

https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/classification_and_labelling_workplace_hazardous_chemicals_poster_-a4.pdf

General Principles of Labelling

(8) The purpose of labelling is to ensure that the contents of a container can be readily identified by product name, and to provide basic information about the contents of the container – its ingredient(s), hazards and precautions for safe use.

(9) The requirements for the labelling of decanted chemicals are outlined below. Labels are available to print directly from Chemwatch.

(10) A container into which a substance is decanted must be labelled unless:

- a. It is not left unattended by the person who decanted it;
- b. The decanted hazardous chemical is used only by a person present at the decanting process;
- c. The container is subsequently rendered free from any hazardous chemical immediately after use, so the container is in the condition it would be in if it had never contained the chemical.

(11) If the container is too small for all elements to be included, then the minimum required on the label is:

- a. The product identifier;
- b. The name, Australian address and business telephone number of either the manufacturer or importer;
- c. A hazard pictogram or hazard statement that is consistent with the correct classification of the chemical; and
- d. Any other information required for hazardous chemicals labels in general that is reasonably practicable to include.

(12) If the container is too small to include the product name then it may be labelled with:

- a. Sample number(s), and
- b. The contents identified in a laboratory book;
- c. Co-workers must be informed about the hazard(s) and the identification system used.

(13) All labels must be:

- a. Legible to co-workers and emergency services; and
- b. Unambiguous.

(14) Re-used containers must have old labels removed or totally covered with the new label.

(15) Food and beverage containers, e.g. yoghurt containers, drink bottles, sauce bottles, are not permitted to be re-used for chemical storage.

(16) The following lists the steps that are recommended for the preparation of a label for a hazardous chemical. The information is intended for use as a quick reference guide. It may not apply to all situations.

- a. Select the suitable product identifier.
- b. Determine which ingredients require disclosure.
- c. Select the label elements which apply to classification endpoints or hazard categories, in accordance with correct hazard classification.
- d. Combine all applicable elements, and then determine which elements may be omitted from the label to avoid duplication or redundancy.

- e. Determine which label elements may be omitted where a special labelling situation may apply.
- f. Determine whether other relevant health and safety information may be required. Particularly important for hazard endpoints not covered by the GHS but where there are health and safety concerns.
- g. Select the appropriate supplier details to be included. Other information, for example web address or emergency contact phone number, may be included.
- h. Determine whether an expiry date is required. Expiry date is required if degradation over time could change the hazard classification. For example, if a highly toxic impurity is formed.
- i. Identify any other relevant information that may be required. For example, reference to SDS or product use information.
- j. Design the label layout and grouping of information.

Authority and Compliance

(17) The Procedure Administrator, pursuant to the University's Work Health and Safety Rule, makes these procedures.

(18) University Representatives and Students must observe these Procedures in relation to University matters.

(19) These Procedures operate as and from the Effective Date.

(20) Previous Procedures relating to WHS OP013 (Interim) Hazardous Chemicals Procedure are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Procedure.

Section 4 - Definitions

(21) Effective Date means takes effect on the day on which it is published or on such later day as may be specified in the procedure.

(22) Hazard means a situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person, property or the environment.

(23) Hazardous Chemical means any substance, mixture or article that satisfies the criteria for a hazard class in the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

(24) University Representative means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent) contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories

(25) Student means an Admitted Student or an Enrolled Student, at the relevant time.

- a. Admitted student means a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study.
- b. Enrolled student means a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

(26) UNE Act means the University of New England Act 1993 No 68 (NSW).

(27) A Worker, as defined by the WHS Act, is a person that carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:

- a. An employee;

- b. A contractor or subcontractor;
- c. An employee of a contractor or subcontractor;
- d. An employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking;
- e. An outworker;
- f. An apprentice or trainee;
- g. A student gaining work experience;
- h. A volunteer; or
- i. Person of a prescribed class.