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## **United States Agency for International Development**

### **U.S.A.I.D. Hazard Communication Program**

#### **A.PURPOSE**

The establishment of a Hazard Communication Program (HCP) in the Agency for International Development is to comply, at all A.I.D. facilities, with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) for using hazardous chemicals. The HCS requires all employers to determine the types of hazardous chemicals in their workplaces, usually by inventory, provide this information to their employees, and train employees in the safe use and proper handling of the chemicals they use in their workplace.

#### **B. SCOPE/APPLICABILITY**

Since the primary purpose of the HCS is to ensure that employees exposed to physical and health hazards in their workplace are informed of the hazards, a hazard assessment conducted for each A.I.D. facility will determine which employees must be included in the program. However, the HCP will apply to the following:

1. All employees who have potential on the job exposure to chemical agents.
2. All personnel employed on a full-time, part-time (direct hire), temporary, or seasonal basis.

All personnel employed in maintenance operations, printing and graphics facilities, laboratories (photo, medical, passport, etc.), warehouses, and any other activity where chemicals are used on a regular basis.

Office workers whose job activities involve routine exposure to chemical agents.

**NOTE:** Most offices are relatively free of hazardous chemicals. However, such products as glass and video display terminal cleaners can be a source of eye or respiratory irritation for certain individuals.

3. Contract employees performing work within government facilities are covered by their employers HCP. However, they must receive information concerning the identity of hazardous chemicals they could encounter while working within the A.I.D. facility. Therefore, the facility HCP must have established methods to inform contractors about potential hazards to which their employees may be exposed.

**NOTE:** A.I.D. issued contracts shall contain language which requires contractors to notify the Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR), the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO), and the appropriate Administrative or Executive Management Official of any hazardous chemicals the contractor may bring into the facility. The contractor must also provide the MSDSs - along with the appropriate labeling of chemicals they have introduced to AID.

## **C. AUTHORITIES**

1. 29 CFR, Part 1960, Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs
2. 29 CFR, Part 1910.1200, Hazard Communication Program
3. Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees
4. U.S.A.I.D. Major Functional Series 500: Management Services ADS Chapter 529 - Safety Program
5. 6 Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 610
6. The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) - Public Law 91596, 84 Stat. 1590, Section 19, December 29, 1970

## **D. DEFINITIONS**

1. Chemical agent - an element, chemical compound or mixture of elements or compounds, but excludes the following: hazardous wastes regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency; tobacco and tobacco products; wood and wood products; or food, drugs, or cosmetics intended for personal consumption by employees.
2. Health hazard - a chemical or biological agent which may have an acute or chronic affect upon employees exposed to it, such as carcinogens, materials toxic to one or more organ systems of the body (e.g., respiratory system, liver, kidneys, reproductive system, blood, etc.), irritants, corrosives, and sensitizers.

3. Physical hazard - a chemical material that may cause physical injury to employees, such as combustible liquids, compressed gases, explosives, flammables, organic peroxides, oxidizers, and materials that are pyrophoric, unstable, or water reactive.
4. Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) - any written or printed information describing the properties of a chemical material, their physical and health hazard, and precautions for safe handling and use.

## **E. POLICIES**

It is the policy of A.I.D. to meet the Safety and Occupational Health requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 and impending regulations in order to provide a safe and healthful working environment for Agency employees. Responsibility rests with managers, within the organization, to ensure that their employees have a safe and healthful working environment to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements.

A Hazard Communication Program is established at the Bureau/Office level to inform employees of the potential physical and health hazards that may result from exposure to chemical and biological agents in the A.I.D. work environment. Program information is available from the office of the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (FA/AS, Director, Office of Administrative Services) and from the Administrative or Executive Management Official of each bureau and office.

## **F. HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM/PROVISIONS**

### **Responsibilities/Procedures**

1. Chemical Inventory
  - a. \*Managers are to maintain an inventory of all hazardous chemicals used in their facilities on a regular basis. This inventory will be updated as necessary and upon receipt of new hazardous chemicals in the facility. A copy of the inventory must be submitted to the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official and the appropriate Administrative or Executive Management Official.
  - b. Managers are responsible for acquiring and updating Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals purchased for their facilities. They must provide employees ready access to MSDSs for the hazardous chemicals present in their workplace. All manufacturers are responsible for providing MSDSs to a purchaser. An MSDS should be requested with the purchase contract or at the time of purchase.

\*Managers are defined as all A.I.D. Bureau and Office personnel who oversee employees working in a.) Maintenance operations, b.) Printing and graphics facilities, c.) Laboratories (photo, medical, passport, etc.), d.) Warehouses, and e.) Any other activity where chemicals are used on a regular

basis. Managers include all A.I.D. Bureau and Office personnel who oversee office workers whose job activities involve routine exposure to chemical agents and chemical based products.

## **F. HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM/PROVISIONS (Cont'd.)**

### **Responsibilities/Procedures (Cont'd.)**

#### **2. Labels and Other Forms of Warning**

When managers determine hazardous chemicals are used in their facilities, they must ensure that:

- a. Each chemical container is labeled, tagged with the identity of the contents, the manufacturer's name and address, and appropriate hazard warnings.
- b. Immediate use containers, small containers into which materials are used over an eight-hour shift by the employee, do not require labels.
- c. Existing labels or tags on containers brought into a workplace must not be removed or defaced unless the container is marked with the required information.
- d. Managers should routinely check to ensure that all containers in the facility are labeled and that the labels are up to date.

#### **3. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)**

Employees using hazardous chemicals are informed of those hazards through MSDSs (see F.I.b. above) and appropriate training.

- a. Managers must provide employees ready access to MSDSs for the hazardous chemicals present in their workplace.
- b. Information about safe handling, health hazards, and other technical data can be obtained from the MSDS or the Agency Safety and Health Specialist, if necessary.

## **F. HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM/PROVISIONS (Cont'd.)**

### **Responsibilities/Procedures (Cont'd.)**

#### **4. Training and Employee Information**

Managers shall ensure that every employee who works with or is potentially exposed to hazardous chemicals receives initial training on the HCS and MSDS information on the safe use of those hazardous chemicals. Whenever a new hazard is introduced into the employees work environment, additional training shall be provided for those employees.

Prior to the introduction of a new chemical or chemical agent into the A.I.D. work environment, contract employees must inform the COTR with a copy of the MSDS along with the appropriate labeling of the chemical or chemical agent. The COTR shall then inform the Agency DASHO and the appropriate AMS or EMS official. Contract employees are to be trained by their parent company on the safe use and handling of hazardous chemicals they use in the A.I.D. facility.

The A.I.D. employee training should emphasize the following elements:

- a. A summary of the HCS (29 CFR 1910.1200) written program. (Copies can be obtained from the Agency Occupational Safety and Health Staff.)
- b. A list of the hazardous chemicals.
- c. The location of the MSDSs for the hazardous chemicals in the employees' work area.
- d. An explanation of the MSDS labeling system.
- e. An explanation of the MSDS content and how to use the appropriate hazard information.
- f. Physical and health hazards associated with exposure to workplace chemicals.
- g. Procedures to protect against hazards (e.g., personal protective equipment, work practices, and emergency procedures).
- h. Hazardous chemical storage, spill or leak, and waste disposal procedures.
- i. Methods that can be used to detect the presence or release of hazardous chemicals and hazardous chemical properties including unusual appearance.

## **5. Chemical Purchases**

A.I.D. employees who procure potentially hazardous chemicals or chemical agents should place language in the purchase order to request from the manufacturer a copy of the MSDS for each chemical purchased.

## **G. INQUIRIES**

Inquiries should be directed to the Occupational Safety and Health Staff, MA/AS/OMS.

## **H. FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS**

Sample Hazard Communication Inventory

### **Introduction**

In November 1983, The Occupational Safety and Health Administration published in the Federal Register a Hazard Communication Standard (HCS). This standard, requires that all employers evaluate the hazards of chemicals present in their workplace through inventory and composition; provide this information to their employees, and train employees in the proper use and handling of such chemicals to minimize their risk of overexposure.

The underlying purpose of the standard is to reduce the incidence illnesses and injuries due to chemical exposure by providing managers and supervisors with information they need to develop and implement protective programs for their employees. In addition this standard was to help assure that employees will support and participate in such a program by providing employees information relevant to their safety and health. Since, it is a "right-to-know" law, it gives the employees access to information regarding the identity, composition, hazards, and protective treatment for their exposure to chemicals.

Executive Order 12196 and 29 CFR Part 1960 ensure that this program is applicable to federal employees. The enclosed Hazard Communication Program provides written guidelines for complying with the HCS at all AID/Washington and overseas facilities handling hazardous materials.

You are encouraged to consider these requirements carefully and to give these requirements your personal attention.

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