

# Getting a Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Program Started

INFORMATION

- **Appoint a senior manager to co-ordinate WHMIS.**
- Request supervisors to **identify all chemicals** used in the workplace. Check for exemptions under **WHMIS**.
- Arrange for inclusion of hazard updates and new information.
- **Contact suppliers** for Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or confirmation that the chemical substance is not a controlled product.
- If MSDS are not available, contact sources such as the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety in Hamilton for information (see WHMIS resource information).
- **Create a master file for MSDSs.** Set up procedures for ensuring that all controlled products received have proper labels and MSDS.
- Make MSDS readily available at each worksite where the product is used.
- **Decide on a system of workplace labels for the organization.** Choose a system which is easy to understand.
- Ensure all containers of controlled products are properly labeled. Check the requirements for reaction vessels, pipes, etc. and laboratories. (Section 322 to 325 of *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996*).
- **Set up safe work procedures.** Consult MSDSs for the supplier's recommendations. Use engineering measures to control hazards whenever feasible.
- **Determine who will require WHMIS training** and develop a suitable training program in conjunction with the occupational health committee.
- Train each group of employees in the dangers and safe handling of materials they use. Consult the MSDS for details.
- Incorporate WHMIS into orientation.
- Evaluate the training needs each year and when new information is received.
- **Evaluate your WHMIS program each year to make sure it works.**

See reverse ...



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8th Floor,  
122-3rd Avenue North  
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**Toll Free: 1-800-667-5023**



## WHMIS Exceptions

**Note:** While certain products are totally or partially exempt from WHMIS requirements, other provincial health and safety legislation will apply (for example, Part XXI of the Regulations).

### *Products Fully Exempt From WHMIS*

1. Wood products made of wood.
2. Manufactured articles.
3. Tobacco or products made of tobacco.
4. Products handled or transported pursuant to the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act*.

Hazardous waste is exempt, however, the employer must ensure safe handling and storage by any method of identification and worker education.

### *Products Partially Exempt From WHMIS*

The following are exempt from WHMIS label and MSDS provisions but not from work training requirements.

1. Prescribed substances within the meaning of the *Atomic Energy Control Act*.
2. Explosives within the meaning of the *Explosives Act*.
3. Cosmetic, drugs, food and devices within the meaning of the *Food and Drug Act*.
4. Pest control products within the meaning of the *Pest Control Products Act*.
5. Consumer products.

## WHMIS Resource Information

WHMIS employer requirements are explained in *The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993* and Part XXII of the Regulations and WHMIS publications that can be viewed at ([www.labour.gov.sk.ca](http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca)).

Information and assistance regarding WHMIS in Saskatchewan are available from the Occupational Health and Safety Division contact info on the reverse side of this document.

WHMIS supplier requirements can be found in the *Hazardous Products Act* and the *Controlled Products Regulations*. They are also explained in the Reference Manual. This information can be viewed on the WHMIS Official National site at: ([http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/occup-travail/whmis-simdut/index\\_e.html/](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/occup-travail/whmis-simdut/index_e.html/))

WHMIS Core Material is a comprehensive resource manual for interpreting and applying requirements of WHMIS. This can be viewed at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)

Databases are available to help you obtain MSDSs and information on material classifications. For more information, contact:

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety ([www.ccohs.ca](http://www.ccohs.ca))  
E-mail: [clientservices@cchos.ca](mailto:clientservices@cchos.ca)  
1-800-263-8466