

## Manager/Supervisor Risk Management

#150-5/9/13

A twice weekly e-mail training for YCPARMIA members

### TOPIC: SAFETY – HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This topic deals with the potential exposure to hazardous chemicals in the workplace – virtually every YCPARMIA member has this exposure. The requirements and classifications are technical, and will require safety expertise in developing and applying a Hazardous Communication Policy – which again should be a supplement to the entity's IIPP. Also of note, the Federal OSHA has recently come out with new standards (Cal/OSHA is currently revising their standards to be compliant with the new federal standards); members should be reviewing their existing policies in anticipation of modifications needed to bring them into compliance with the new developing standards.

The general requirement is that the employer evaluates their chemical exposures and communicates information regarding the hazard that they represent to the employees. If the employer has hazardous chemicals in their workplaces they must have a hazard communication program which includes:

- Container labels: required to provide a brief summary of hazard information for the chemicals being used. The required elements on the label include a product identifier, a signal word (“danger,” hazard” etc.), hazard statement, pictograms (skull and crossbones, flame, etc), precautionary statements (“store in well ventilated space”, etc.), and supplier information.
- Safety data sheets: the new HazCom standard requires chemical manufacturers, distributors, and/or importers to provide safety data sheets, formally known as Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to communicate the hazards present in the chemical product. And
- Employee training: The new standards require “effective training” for the employees. Effective means that they must carry the knowledge from the training into their daily work.

The HazCom standard, which has a number of exemptions, applies to “any chemical which is known to be present in the workplace in such a manner that employees may be exposed under normal conditions of use or in a foreseeable emergency.” The standard is triggered by one employee and one chemical being present in the workplace. Remembering that we are dealing with government standards, there are 10 pre-defined health hazard classifications, 16 physical hazard classifications, and 2 environmental hazard classifications. Each of these classifications is further qualified by categories reflecting different levels of severity.

YCPARMIA, upon request, is able to provide assistance in our members’ transition from their current Hazardous Communication/Materials policy into a revised policy that meets the new OSHA standards.

Next Topic: Safety – Violence in the Workplace