



# Lexington County Fire Service

Standard Operating Procedures  
Hazard Communications ADM-008

**EFFECTIVE:** September 27, 2007    **ISSUED BY:** Russell R. Rawl, Fire Service Coordinator

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**RECINDS:** Previous Policy

**SCOPE:** All Lexington County Fire Service personnel.

**PURPOSE:** This program is intended to serve as a guideline for training and protecting firefighter employees and for complying with regulatory requirements. The goal of this program is to ensure protection of all employees involved in the handling and use of hazardous chemicals.

**INTRODUCTION:** On November 25, 1983, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued the Hazard Communication Standard, 29 CFR 1810.1200, commonly known as the Employee's Right-to-Know Law. This Department of Labor standard originally was aimed towards protecting manufacturing workers from injuries and illnesses due to chemical exposures. It established specific requirements for manufacturing employers to provide information and training to affected employees about the chemicals they may encounter in the workplace.

Beginning May 23, 1988, the Hazard Communications Standard was applied to an expanded scope of employers, including construction and government entities.

**POLICY:** All Lexington County firefighter employees who may be exposed to hazardous chemicals shall be trained as outlined in this Hazard Communication Program. It shall be the policy of this agency to maintain awareness of all hazardous chemicals encountered by the employees and to communicate any associated hazards along with the necessary safety precautions.

## I. PRINCIPLE REQUIREMENTS OF THE HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD

- A. Ensure that each container of hazardous chemicals in the workplace is labeled, tagged, or marked with the identity of the chemical and appropriate hazard warnings.
- B. Maintain copies of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for each hazardous chemical in the workplace, and ensure that the MSDSs are readily accessible to employees.
- C. Provide employees with specific information regarding hazardous chemicals in their work area at the time of their initial assignment and whenever a new hazard is introduced into their work area. Employees must be informed of:
  - 1. Requirements of Hazard Communication Standard
  - 2. Any operations in their work area where hazardous chemicals are present, and
  - 3. The location and availability of the written hazard communications program and the MSDSs.
- D. Provide employees with training regarding hazardous chemicals in their work area at the time of their initial assignment and whenever a new hazard is introduced into their area. The training must include at least.
  - 1. Methods and observations that may be used to detect the presence of a chemical in the work area,
  - 2. Physical and health hazards of the chemicals in the work area.
  - 3. Measures employees can take to protect themselves from those hazards, and
  - 4. Details of the employer's hazard communication program, including an explanation of the MSDSs, the labeling system, and the methods for employees to obtain and use the appropriate hazard.
- E. Develop, implement, and maintain a written hazard communication program. This program must also include a list of the hazardous chemicals known to be present. It must also provide a description of methods that will be used to inform employees of the hazards of non-routine tasks.

## II. CHEMICALS EXEMPTED FROM THE HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD

- A. Any food, food additive, color additive, drug, or cosmetic, as defined in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 USC 301 et seq.) are subject to the requirements of that specific act.
- B. Any distilled spirits (beverage alcohols), wine, or malt beverage intended for non-industrial use as defined in the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 USC 201 et seq.) are subject to requirements of that specific act.

- C. Any consumer product or hazardous substance as those defined in the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 USC 2051 et seq.) are subject to requirements of that specific act.
- D. Any hazardous waste defined by the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 is subject to regulations under that specific act by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- E. Tobacco or tobacco products
- F. Wood or wood products
- G. Articles which do not release, or otherwise result in exposure to, a hazardous chemical under normal conditions of use are not subject to the Hazard Communications Standard.
- H. Foods, drugs, or cosmetics intended for personal consumption or use in the workplace also are not subject to the Hazard Communications Standard.

### III. MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS)

#### A. Obtain an MSDS:

A Materials Safety Data Sheet is required for each hazardous chemical on the Workplace Chemical Listing, included in Attachment A1. Chemical manufacturers and suppliers are required to provide a MSDS for each chemical provided to a customer. The Station Training Officer will obtain and provide Material Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals.

For products received directly from the manufacturer or distributor, MSDSs will be provided by the manufacturer or distributor. A copy of correspondence requesting MSDSs will be maintained in the MSDS file until each MSDS is supplied.

#### B. Maintaining MSDSs

Material Safety Data Sheets, a copy of this written Hazard Communication Program, and a list of hazardous materials (Workplace Chemical Listing) are to be permanently maintained in a notebook in each fire station office area. This will be readily accessible to all employees.

#### C. Updating MSDSs

Incoming Material Safety Data Sheets shall be reviewed by the Station Officers and maintained. If a new MSDS has been revised, the old MSDS will be

transferred to a permanent file. The date of removal shall be written on the old MSDS and it will be placed in a file labeled, "Old Material Safety Data Sheets." The old MSDSs will be maintained thirty (30) years past the duration of any exposed employees' employment.

#### IV. CONTAINER LABELING

##### A. Incoming Containers:

Chemical manufacturers and suppliers are responsible for labeling containers of hazardous chemicals. It is the responsibility of the Station Officers or his designee, to ensure that each container arriving at the fire station is labeled or marked legibly with the following information.

1. Identity of material
2. Appropriate hazard warnings
3. Name and address of the chemical manufacturer, supplier, or other responsible party. (Recommendation only.)

##### B. Workplace or Temporary Containers

Hazardous chemicals which are dispensed from the original shipping container must be placed into an appropriate container. The container must contain the following information:

1. Identify of material
2. Appropriate hazard warnings

If a chemical is transferred to a temporary container and is to be used exclusively by one employee during one work shift, it may be used from an unlabeled container. However, if the employee leaves the chemical unattended at any time, then the chemical container must be labeled.

##### C. Updating of Labels:

If the Fire Department is notified of significant hazard characteristic changes on an updated MSDS, the Station Officers shall see that any outdated hazard warnings on labels are corrected to convey the updated information.

#### V. NON-ROUTINE TASKS

##### A. Circumstances may require employees to perform tasks that involve potential exposure to hazardous chemicals which are not in the course of the regular job.

Prior to beginning these tasks, employees must be notified regarding the following:

1. The nature of any hazardous chemicals present. Materials Safety Data Sheets for those chemicals should be reviewed in detail and all recommendations followed in preparing for the tasks.
  2. Precautionary measures and protective equipment needed to perform the task.
  3. Any hazards associated with chemicals present in unlabeled pipes, such as refrigeration ammonia and propane in distribution systems.
- B. When in doubt, the Fire Chief or his designate should be contacted before proceeding with an unfamiliar task which may endanger the employee.

## VI. NON-DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL (CONTRACTORS, VISITORS, ETC)

- A. Mutual delivery of chemical hazard information is necessary between the fire department and outside personnel:
1. The Lexington County Fire Service must be informed of all hazardous substances to be brought into the workplace by contractors and/or other personnel.
  2. Contractors and/or other personnel must be informed of all hazardous substances they may encounter during their activities in the Fire Department workplace.
- B. It is the responsibility of the Fire Department to inform its employees and provide any necessary training to deal with chemical hazards brought into the workplace. Likewise, it is a responsibility of the fire department to provide contractors and/or other personnel adequate information on chemical hazards within the workplace. This is necessary so that the contractor can inform and provide his/her employees with any necessary training.

In dealing with contractors or other personnel, the following information shall be exchanged.

1. A list of hazardous chemicals to which they may be exposed while on the job site;
2. Precautions that employees may take to lessen the possibility of exposure; and
3. The location of MSDSs (which must immediately available).

## VII. EMPLOYEE TRAINING

- A. All employees of the Lexington County Fire Service are required to receive initial hazard communication training. Employees who are or may be exposed to hazardous chemicals in the workplace shall receive additional training on each

chemical hazard. New employees shall be trained as soon as possible after hiring and before they are assigned to work with hazardous chemicals.

- B. Initial hazard communication training will be conducted by the Chief or designee. The initial training shall consist of a brief discussion of all sections of this Hazard Communication Program. The required checklist and information for new employee hazard communication orientation is included as Appendix A3.
- C. Additional training shall be conducted by the Training Officer on specific chemical hazards in each workplace and when a new hazard, not necessarily a new chemical, is introduced into the work place.
- D. Documented records of training shall be maintained in the official Hazard Communications Notebook containing the training program. Information and records kept in the Hazard Communication Notebook shall include the following:
  - 1. A copy of the Hazard Communications Program
  - 2. A description of training materials and information used
  - 3. Completed training rosters with dates training is completed
- E. Follow-up training shall be conducted by the Training Officer to insure that affected employees remain aware of the Hazard Communication Standard and its requirements, that they can show where the Material Safety Data Sheets are located. They must also be generally familiar with the hazardous properties of the chemicals in their work area and understand the protective measures which must be implemented when working with these chemicals. Follow-up training will be completed annually for all employees of Lexington County Fire Service.

APPENDIX A1

ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR  
THE HAZARD COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

1. Workplace Listing of Hazardous Chemicals

Responsible for maintaining list of hazardous chemicals in the workplace:

Name:

Position:

2. Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)

Responsible for obtaining and maintaining MSDSs for all listed hazardous chemicals in the workplace:

Name:

Position:

3. Labeling

Responsible for ensuring adequate labeling on incoming containers:

Name:

Position:

4. Employee Training

Responsible for conducting site-specific training initially and annually for all employees who may be exposed to hazardous chemicals:

Name:

Position:

5. Non-Routine Tasks and Non-Departmental Personnel

Responsible for informing employees and non-Departmental personnel of hazards they may encounter in the fire department:

Name:

Position:

APPENDIX A2

WORKPLACE CHEMICAL LISTING  
OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FOR LEXINGTON COUNTY FIRE SERVICE

Diesel Fuel Oil

Gasoline, Unleaded

Firefighting Foam

Oil Absorbent

Cleaning Materials

APPENDIX A3

HAZARD COMMUNICATION  
TRAINING FOR NEW EMPLOYEES  
LEXINGTON COUNTY FIRE SERVICE

I certify that I have been instructed about the importance of the following:

1. Employees rights under the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard
2. The location of the Lexington County Fire Service's written Hazard Communications Program.
3. Physical and health hazards of chemicals
4. Location of Material Safety Data Sheets for chemicals with which I will be working.
5. Safe work practices: how employees can protect themselves from hazards
6. How to detect the presence of hazardous substances.
7. Emergency procedures – evacuation, hazardous spills, fire, etc.
8. Emergency first aid techniques.
9. Interpreting MSDS Health and Safety Information.
10. Explanation of the labeling system.
11. Explanation, use of, and location of personal protection equipment.
12. Procedures for working with outside contractors and others.
13. Performing non-routine tasks.

I understand the key items and have a working knowledge of the Hazard Communications Program.

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



