



Hazard Communication Information Sheet
reflecting the US OSHA Implementation of
the *Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of
Classification and Labelling of Chemicals*

*Produced by the SCHC-OSHA Alliance
GHS/HazCom Information Sheet Workgroup*

Precautionary Statements

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How is Precautionary Statement defined under OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) 2012?

Precautionary statement" means a phrase that describes recommended measures that should be taken to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous chemical or improper storage or handling.

In other words a precautionary statement is a phrase that describes recommended measures that should be taken to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous chemical, or due to improper storage or handling.

How is Precautionary Statement used under HCS 2012?

A precautionary statement is required on the container label and on the safety data sheet in Section 2; Hazard Identification [see 1910.1200(f) and (g)]. Once the hazard classification is determined, label statements are chosen. The applicable statements are chosen using the hazard category identified during the hazard classification process and found in Appendix C of the HCS [1910.1200]. In the appendix, precautionary statements are broken into four sections: Prevention, Response, Storage and Disposal. Note that not all sections apply in all cases (depending on the hazard classification).

Below is a portion of Appendix C of the HCS that demonstrates the precautionary statements a label and SDS creator would use for an Oral Acute Toxic hazard.

Appendix C Section C.4.1 : Acute Toxicity - Oral

Precautionary statements			
Prevention	Response	Storage	Disposal
<p>Wash ...thoroughly after handling.</p> <p>... Chemical manufacturer, importer, or distributor to specify parts of the body to be washed after handling.</p> <p>Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product.</p>	<p>If swallowed: Immediately call a poison center/doctor/...</p> <p>... Chemical manufacturer, importer, or distributor to specify the appropriate source of emergency medical advice.</p> <p>Specific treatment (see ... on this label)</p> <p>... Reference to supplemental first aid instruction.</p> <p><i>- if immediate administration of antidote is required.</i></p> <p>Rinse mouth.</p>	<p>Store locked up.</p>	<p>Dispose of contents/container to...</p> <p>... in accordance with local/regional/national/international regulations (to be specified).</p>

Important considerations when using the precautionary statement tables in Appendix C:

- The core part of the precautionary statement is presented in bold print. This is the text that must appear on the label. In addition, there may be information shown below the listed bold print that provides guidance to the preparer that also must be provided on labels and SDSs.
- The “backslash (/)” means that a choice has to be made between the separated phrases. For example, “Wear protective gloves/protective clothing/eye protection/face protection” could read “Wear eye protection”, “Wear protective gloves and clothing.”, or “Wear protective clothing and eye protection.”
- The “three full stops (...)” mean that all applicable conditions are not listed. For example, in “Use explosion-proof electrical/ventilating/lighting/.../equipment”, the use of “...” indicates that other equipment may need to be specified.
- The text in *italics* indicates that specific conditions applying to the use or allocation of the precautionary statement are intended as an explanation only and are not intended for the label
- The “square brackets ([])” indicate that the text in square brackets is not appropriate in every case and should be used only in certain circumstances.
- Precautionary statements may be combined or consolidated to save label space and improve readability. For example, using the following statements: “keep away from heat, sparks and open flame”; “store in a well-ventilated place”; **and** “keep cool”; these may be combined to read: “keep away from heat, sparks, open flame and store in a cool well-ventilated place.”
- Where a chemical is classified for a number of hazards, and the precautionary statements are similar, only the most stringent is included on the label
- If the chemical manufacturer, importer, or responsible party can demonstrate that a precautionary statement is inappropriate to a specific substance or mixture, the precautionary statement may be omitted from the label.

To learn more...

- OSHA: Hazard Communication: <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/index.html>
HCS 2012.
- SCHC site: <http://www.schc.org/osha-alliance>

The information contained in this sheet is believed to accurately represent current OSHA HCS requirements. However, SCHC cannot guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this information. Users are responsible for determining the suitability and appropriateness of these materials for any particular application.

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