

## ***Toxic Substances Policy***

The purpose of the Toxic Substances Policy is to protect employees from hazards associated with the storage and handling of hazardous and toxic substances, and to ensure compliance with New Hampshire Department of Labor Standards 1403.57 Toxic Substances and N.H. RSA 277-A Worker's Right to Know Act.

### **A. Employers Responsibilities**

The employer shall train employees who handle, use, or are otherwise exposed to hazardous and toxic substances in accordance with N.H. RSA 277-A "Worker's Right to Know Act." He/She must keep a running inventory of all hazardous and toxic substances in the workplace, determine the level of chemical hazards within the workplace, and replace chemicals with less harmful alternatives when applicable. The employer is also responsible for creating and obtaining Material Safety Data Sheets for all hazardous and toxic substances in the workplace available to employees, upon request, for examination and reproduction. The employer must ensure proper labeling of all hazardous and toxic substances, including those that are transferred out of their original containers, and post appropriate signs and notices as required by N.H. RSA 277-A "Worker's Right to Know Act." As the employer, he/she shall implement engineering and administrative controls to protect workers from exposure to hazardous and toxic substances, such as radioactive substances or other hazardous substances that are defined as a toxic substance. When engineering and administrative controls are not feasible to achieve acceptable levels, protective equipment shall be used to keep the exposure of employees below the established limits.

### **B. Employee Responsibilities**

The employee shall handle, store, and dispose of hazardous and toxic substances according to manufacturer's guidelines, never mix chemicals unless authorized by employer, and never remove labels from containers of hazardous or toxic substances. The employee shall always use appropriate personal protective equipment when the employer and/or the Material Safety Data Sheet indicate that it is necessary.

### **C. Procedural Overview**

Material Safety Data Sheets shall be supplied for each hazardous and toxic substance in the workplace, and shall be kept on file in a convenient office location and made available, upon request, for examination and reproduction.

Each Material Safety Data Sheet must contain the following information about the substance for which it is supplied:

- Identity of the substance as it is listed on the label
- The chemical's common name
- If the chemical is a mixture, the identity of the ingredients
- Physical and chemical characteristics

- Physical and health hazards including the primary routes of entry into the body
- Safe handling, use and disposal procedures
- Spill and leak precautions and procedures
- Emergency and first aid procedures
- Name, address and phone number of the chemical manufacturer

All hazardous and toxic substances must have a label containing the identity of the substance, name and address of the chemical manufacturer or importer, and hazard warnings including acute and chronic health hazards as well as physical hazards. Labels must be substantial, and may not be removed under any circumstances. Containers without labels must be removed from use, even if the contents are supposedly known. Signs, placards, process sheets, batch tickets, operating procedures, or other written materials may be used in place of individual container labels as long as the above labeling requirements are met.

Employees will receive training on hazardous and toxic substances upon employment, and whenever a new hazard becomes present.

Employees will receive the following information:

- Any operations in their work area where hazardous chemicals are present;
- Location and availability of Material Safety Data Sheets and lists of chemicals.

Employees will be trained in the following areas:

- Methods and observations that may be used to detect the presence or release of a hazardous chemical in the work area
- Physical and health hazards of the chemicals in their work area
- Methods employees can use to protect themselves from hazards in their work area;
- Labeling systems
- How to use Material Safety Data Sheets.

#### **D. Personal Protective Equipment**

Personal protective equipment required for handling hazardous and toxic substances will be listed on each Material Safety Data Sheet. Equipment most commonly requires face shields, rubber gloves, goggles, and aprons.

*From the Town of Amherst's Policy and Procedure Manual, 2009.*