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WHS-PRO-018

Hazardous Substances Procedure

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that any hazardous substances used as part of the organisation operations are identified and controlled in a manner to minimise the risk of adverse health effects to all employees.

SCOPE

Applies to the identification and assessment of all hazardous substances, including labelling and the provision of Safety Data Sheets (SDS), information and training. Under the WHS Regulations, a hazardous substance is any substance, mixture or article that satisfies the criteria of one or more Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) hazard classes, including a classification in Schedule 6 of the WHS Regulations.

REFERENCES

- AS/NZS 4801:2001 OH&S Management Systems – 4.4.6 Hazard Identification, Hazard/Risk Assessment and Control of Hazards
- WHS Regulation 2011 – Chapter 7 Hazardous Chemicals
- Safe Work Australia - Code of Practice – Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals
- Safe Work Australia - Code of Practice – Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace

DEFINITIONS

Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)

A single internationally agreed system of chemical classification and hazard communication through labelling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

Hazardous Substances

Workplace hazardous substances are substances, mixtures and articles used in the workplace that can be classified according to their health and physicochemical hazards.

Manager

For the purposes of this procedure, the term ‘manager’ refers to either the Building and Site Services Manager, Projects Manager, or the Volunteer Manager. The manager responsible will be dependent on the site on which the works are being undertaken

Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS)

A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) is a document that outlines the construction work activities to be carried out at a workplace, the hazards that may arise from these activities, and the measures to be put in place to control the risks.

SDS – Safety Data Sheet

A Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is a document that contains information on the potential hazards (health, fire, reactivity and environmental) of a substance and how to work safely with it.

Site Supervisor

A person assigned to oversee and maintain overall responsibility for the work site and any work conducted on it. The Site Supervisor must possess all necessary training and accreditation for their role (i.e. be ‘ticketed’) and ensure that it is current.

FORMS

- WHS-FOR-018.1 Hazardous Substances Register

ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHS Regulatory Requirements

- The WHS Regulations 2011 include specific duties for Sydney Harbour Federation Trust to manage the risks to health and safety associated with using, handling, generating and storing hazardous substances at a workplace.
- The duties include:
 - a) correct labelling of containers and pipework, using warning placards and outer warning placards and displaying of safety signs
 - b) maintaining a register of hazardous substances
 - c) identifying risk of physical or chemical reaction of hazardous substances and ensuring the stability of hazardous substances
 - d) ensuring that exposure standards are not exceeded
 - e) provision of health monitoring to employees
 - f) provision of information, training, instruction and supervision to employees
 - g) obtaining the current Safety Data Sheet (SDS) from the manufacturer, importer or supplier of the substance
 - h) provision and availability of fire protection, firefighting equipment and emergency and safety equipment
- Prior to any work taking place, the Site Supervisor is to ensure that Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) are developed and that they:
 - ensure identified hazards, risks and controls are addressed in the SWMS
 - specify the controls for the work to be performed
 - specify the emergency and rescue procedures to be used, including any necessary equipment and specific training requirements for the rescue team
- The SWMS will dictate how critical the duties are and the controls to be implemented.

An overview of the Hazardous Substances duties listed above is as follows.

a) Labelling Products

- All existing hazardous substances on-site and those purchased shall be labelled as per Schedule 9 of the WHS Regulation 2011.
- If hazardous substances are decanted for immediate use, by the person who decanted them, they will not require a label provided that the container is cleaned out directly afterwards. The procedure for cleaning out the contained should be per the requirements of the SDS.
- If a hazardous substance has been decanted or transferred from the container in which it was packed and it will not be used immediately or is supplied to someone else, the following labelling conventions shall be complied with:
 - If used within 12 hours, the label shall be written in English and include the full product name and a hazard warning such as a pictogram (as per Appendix F of the Code of Practice Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals), or hazard statement consistent with the correct classification of the chemical (e.g. appropriate risk and safety phrases).

- If the hazardous substance remains in the decanted container for an extended period, or the container is repeatedly used to decant the hazardous chemical, then a permanent label with all the general labelling information shall be attached to the container. Permanently labelled containers shall not be used to contain any other substances or mixtures than those specified on the label.
- All decanted substances should be placed into a container that is easily identifiable or has a label, supplied by the supplier of the chemical, that can be attached to the container bottle.
- If there is a timeline applied to the decanted substance, this should be recognised within the standard operating procedure that is derived from the SDS and communicated to all staff using that chemical.

b) Hazardous Substances Register

- At each site, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust shall identify and list all substances/chemicals and list on the **WHS-FOR-018.1 Hazardous Substances Register**.
- Keep the **WHS-FOR-018.1 Hazardous Substances Register** up to date by entering new substances/chemicals as they come into the workplace; and removing obsolete substances/chemicals that are no longer used or kept in the workplace.

c) Identifying Hazardous Substances and Ensuring Their Stability

Identification

- A hazardous substance can be identified by:
 - A clear statement in the SDS defining the product as hazardous
 - The use of pictograms, warning words and phrases on labels and packaging
 - The product fits within one of the categories listed in the GHS Classification.

Pre-Purchasing

- Before any new chemical/substances are purchased the hazards and risks involved in handling, storage and use shall be determined.
- Information from the SDS shall be used for this purpose.

Storage

- Quantities of hazardous substances should be kept to a minimum.
- Storage conditions stipulated in the SDS shall be followed to ensure stability for hazardous substances. This includes requirements for separation and segregation by class type for all incompatible substances.
- It may require having dedicated Australian Standard approved cabinet for each type of dangerous substance (depending on quantity stored).

Disposal

- All hazardous substance waste needs to be: handled, stored, labelled, and disposed of safely in accordance with the legislative requirements.
- If a new substance is introduced into the workplace, and an old substance is replaced within the process, then the disposal procedure stated in the SDS must be followed.

d) Exposure Standards

- Exposure to hazardous substances must be kept as low as reasonably practical, with the identified controls to minimise exposure implemented.

- Where a substance has an exposure standard, it must be ensured that an individual's exposure to the substance is under the exposure level set.

e) Employee Health Monitoring

- Health monitoring may be required for hazardous substances which are toxic or have other health hazards and risks.
- If health monitoring is identified, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust shall:
 - inform employee and prospective employees about health monitoring requirements
 - ensure health monitoring is carried out by or under the supervision of a registered medical practitioner with experience in health monitoring
 - provide a copy of the report to the employee if the report contains adverse test result or recommendations that remedial measures should be taken.
 - keep reports as confidential records for at least 30 years after the record is made (40 years for reports relating to asbestos exposure)
 - not disclose the report to anyone without the employee's written consent unless required under the WHS Regulations.

f) Information, Training, Instruction and Supervision to Employees

- Training shall be provided to affected employees which shall include information about hazardous substances to which employees are exposed to in the course of their work.
- Information should include the nature of the hazards, risks to health arising from exposure, the degree of exposure and routes of entry of the hazardous substances into to the body. This includes information on the forms of hazardous substances including dusts, fumes and other atmospheric contaminants.
- The training is to ensure that where required, staff can:
 - recognise Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances hazard(s) and the harm they could cause;
 - access, read and understand the SDS and label;
 - accurately follow work procedures and instructions to control the risk of the hazard harming them;
 - accurately follow first aid and emergency procedures in place to manage incidents related to Hazardous Substances; and
 - accurately fit, use and maintain any personal protective equipment required to protect them from the hazard.

g) Safety Data Sheet (SDS)

- Managers shall provide SDS for each hazardous chemical and ensure that staff can readily access them. The SDS shall be renewed at least every 5 years or if a substance/chemical changes.
- SDSs should include information relating to the hazardous substance, such as its properties, physical/health/environmental hazards, protective measures, and safety precautions/procedures for handling, storing, transporting and disposing of the substance.

h) Fire Protection, Firefighting, Safety Procedures and Emergency Equipment

- The sites where hazardous substances are stored and used must have fire protection and firefighting equipment that is designed and built for the type of hazardous substances kept, with consideration of the quantities and conditions they are stored under.

- Fire protection and firefighting equipment must be compatible with that used by emergency services, and should be properly installed, tested and maintained.
- Dated records of testing results and maintenance performed should be kept, including dates of next scheduled testing and maintenance.
- Emergency equipment appropriate for the type of hazardous substance stored and used must be on site and easily accessible.
- Before a hazardous substance is used, the Site Supervisor shall ensure personnel are briefed in safety and emergency procedures. At a minimum, the following should be covered:
 - previously rehearsed emergency routines including availability and access to emergency equipment
 - hazards that could not be eliminated and the controls that are in place
 - SWMS relevant to the work space or type of work.