

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES / DANGEROUS GOODS

Golden Brown is committed to continuously improving the management and standards of Occupational health and Safety. This commitment extends to minimising exposure of employees, contractors, visitors and the environment for the safe handling, use and storage of hazardous substances and dangerous goods.

DEFINITIONS

Dangerous Goods

Are substances that may be solids, liquids or gases with any of the following characteristics:

- corrosive
- flammable
- explosive
- spontaneously combustible
- toxic
- oxidising, or
- water reactive

These goods can be deadly, and can seriously damage property and the environment.

Dangerous goods means substances which are either specifically listed in the Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road or Rail (ADG Code) or meet the classification criteria of the ADG Code.

Dangerous goods class means the class allocated to a substance under the ADG Code.

Hazardous Substances

Have the potential to harm human health. These may be solids, liquids or gases. They may be pure substances or mixes.

When used in the workplace, these substances often generate vapours, fumes, dusts and mists. A wide range of industrial, laboratory chemicals are classified as hazardous.

In legal terms, a hazardous substance is a substance which:

- is listed on NOHSC “List of Designated hazardous Substances”
- have been classified as a hazardous substance by the manufacturer or imported in accordance with the National NOHSC “Approved Criteria for Classifying Hazardous Substances”

AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers

Each Manager is responsible for implementing the Hazardous Substances and Dangerous Goods Policy.

This responsibility includes:

- Ensuring that a current MSDS for each hazardous substance and dangerous good used in the area is available and readily accessible to all people.
- Ensure that all vessels of hazardous substances and dangerous goods are labelled / placarded in accordance with the State regulations.
- Ensuring that appropriate safe work procedures are prepared and regularly reviewed for each task involving the use of hazardous substances.
- Ensure so far as is practicable, access by unauthorised persons to areas where dangerous goods are stored and handled is prevented.
- Ensuring that, wherever practicable, material substitution or engineering controls are implemented to minimize personal / environmental exposure to hazardous substances and dangerous goods.
- Ensuring that all people working with hazardous substances and dangerous goods receive adequate training in identification, storage, safe work practices, personal protective equipment requirements and the potential health effects of over exposure to these substances.
- Set up a Hazardous Substance / Dangerous Goods Register
- Identify hazards and assess the risks to people and property if dangerous goods / hazardous substances are used, and record the risk assessment result.
- Ensuring that all contractors working in the area follow management direction with respect to the Hazardous Substances / Dangerous Goods Policy and Procedures.
- Ensuring that all hazardous materials in their department are stored in accordance with the requirements stated in the MSDS.

Employees / Contractors

All employees / contractors must ensure they:

- Read the label of a container that holds any hazardous substance and take note of any “risk phrase(s)” and “safety phrase(s)” thereon.
- Do not adversely expose themselves or other employees / contractors to any hazardous substance.
- Assist in the day to day management of hazardous substances and dangerous goods in their workplace.
- Contractors advise management of all hazardous substances and dangerous goods brought onto the premises in the course of carrying out the contract.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES IN THE WORKPLACE

State regulations require that each individual site assess any work with hazardous substances to ensure that the health of exposed persons is not put at risk.

The aim of the regulation is to minimise the exposure to hazardous substances to below national exposure standards.

Each site must ensure the following matters are addressed:

- Identification of all hazardous substances that are held on the premises, that are brought onto the premises and that are known to be produced on the premises. Where necessary this identification shall be extended to include by-product and waste hazardous substances.
- Provision of an appropriate label and an MSDS for each hazardous substance used in the workplace. The MSDS of the hazardous substance must be readily available to all employees who could be exposed to the hazardous substance.
- Provision of information about the hazards and training in the means of assessment and control of exposure to hazardous substances for all employees who could be exposed to hazardous substances in the course of their work.
- Provision for the assessment of risk arising from exposure to hazardous substances and the facilities and resources for minimisation of the risk.
- Provision for the atmospheric monitoring of exposure to hazardous substances where required and, if necessary, provision for health surveillance.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The health and environmental risk associated with handling and storage of hazardous substances and dangerous goods will vary with each substance and the way it is used.

Factors such as the route of exposure, type of disease, explosion etc need to be considered for assessment. Information about all of these factors can be found in the MSDS for each substance.

- A risk assessment shall be undertaken for all hazardous substances and dangerous goods located on site.
- A record of the assessment must be kept on site whilst that substance is still relevant.
- Copies of the assessment must be made available to any employee / contractors who has the potential to be exposed to the hazard associated with its use or storage.
- The risk assessment is to be reviewed at intervals not exceeding five years.
- The risk assessment is to be reviewed if there is a change in work practices or storage.

MSDS

Material Safety Data Sheets contain information about the hazardous substance or dangerous goods prepared by the manufacturer or importer. They must be readily accessible so that employees / contractors can identify the substance, its hazards and what precautions need to be taken.

Ensure:

- the MSDS represents the manufacturer's or importer's substance
- the MSDS are up to date (no older than 5 years)
- information contained in the MSDS is not altered
- the MSDS are available to all employees / contractors

SELECTION

The procurement of hazardous substances and/or dangerous goods is conditional upon the supplier providing sufficient information to ensure that the substance can be handled, stored, transported, used, processed and disposed of safely. Information shall be provided by the supplier in the form of a current MSDS prior to the products being accepted.

Whenever possible, a safe alternative shall be selected. However, where no safe alternative is available, a suitable but less harmful or dangerous substance shall be considered.

RECEIPT

All hazardous substances and dangerous goods must have adequate labelling to identify the contents, and containers must be in first class condition. Consignments including damaged or corroded containers must not be accepted.

STORAGE AND TRANSPORT

Dangerous goods and hazardous substances are to be stored and transported according to the MSDS, the State regulation or the ADG Code.

NEW SUBSTANCES AND CHANGES TO QUANTITY

New Substances

If a hazardous substance or dangerous good is to be introduced to a site, you must complete an "Introduction of New Substance or Change in Quantity of Substance" form.

Changes to Quantities

The quantities of dangerous goods and hazardous substances at our workplaces shall be maintained at minimal levels, consistent with operational requirements.

If quantities are to be significantly altered, this may affect the classification of the site and an "Introduction of New Substance or Change in Quantity of Substance" form must be completed.

SPILLS, ACCIDENTAL RELEASE AND WASTE DISPOSAL

Dangerous goods and hazardous substances shall be disposed of in accordance with the supplier's or manufacturer's MSDS, taking into account State Environmental Legislation.

Basic information on the safe handling of minor spills and leaks, etc, should be contained in the supplier's or manufacturer's MSDS. This information shall be used for the guidelines and safe work practices when handling minor spills.

Workplaces which store or use large amounts of dangerous goods and hazardous substances shall prepare appropriate contingency plans as part of the workplace Emergency Response Plan.

HEALTH SURVEILLANCE

Health surveillance is the process of monitoring employees' health. Health surveillance may be required under the State's OH&S Regulation or identified as a control measure.

It is the responsibility of the Managers to inform employees if they are being exposed to hazardous substances.