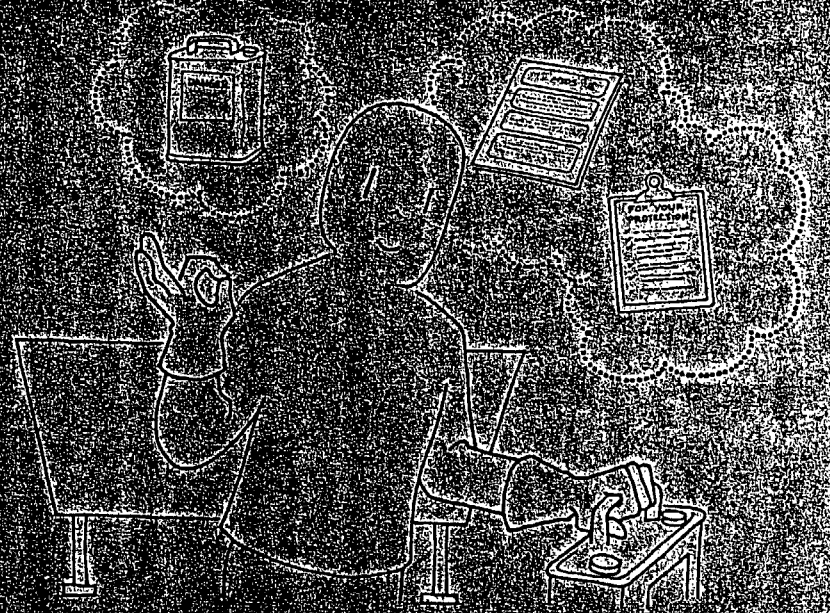
What you should know

ABOUT HAZARD COMMUNICATION



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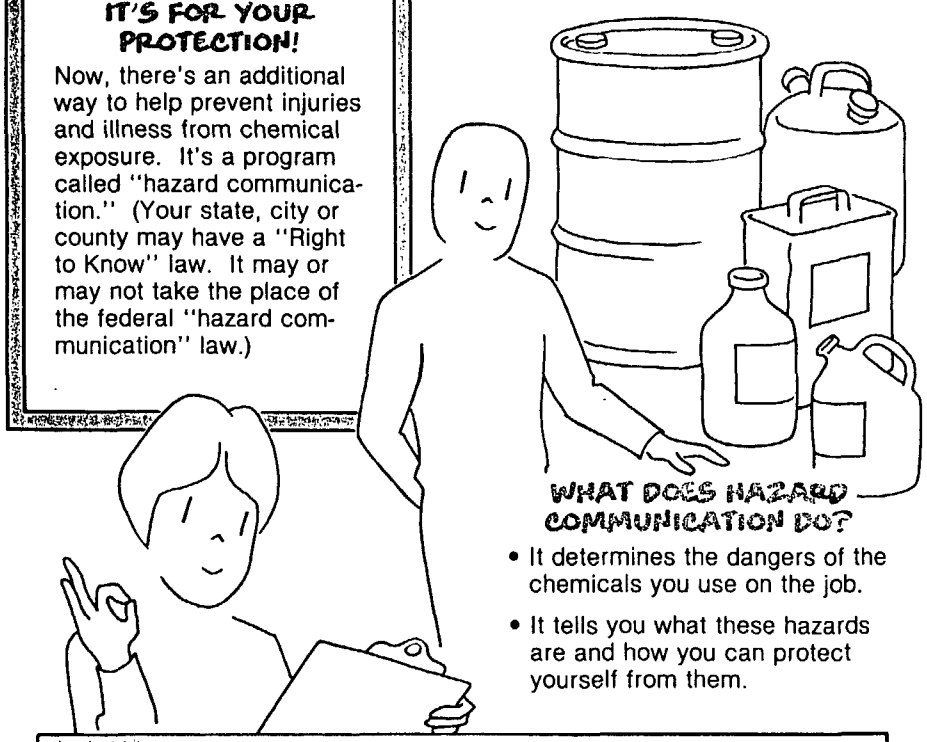
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What is HAZARD COMMUNICATION ?

It's a way for you to get information about chemical hazards in the workplace.

IT'S FOR YOUR PROTECTION!

Now, there's an additional way to help prevent injuries and illness from chemical exposure. It's a program called "hazard communication." (Your state, city or county may have a "Right to Know" law. It may or may not take the place of the federal "hazard communication" law.)



WHAT DOES HAZARD COMMUNICATION DO?

- It determines the dangers of the chemicals you use on the job.
- It tells you what these hazards are and how you can protect yourself from them.

The information in this booklet is not a substitute for standards or regulations issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, provisions of any state or local "Right to Know" law, or your employer's hazard communication program.

A SCRIPTOGRAPHIC BOOKLET by CHANNING L. BETE CO., INC., South Deerfield, MA 01373 U.S.A.
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WHY do I need to KNOW ABOUT chemical hazards ?

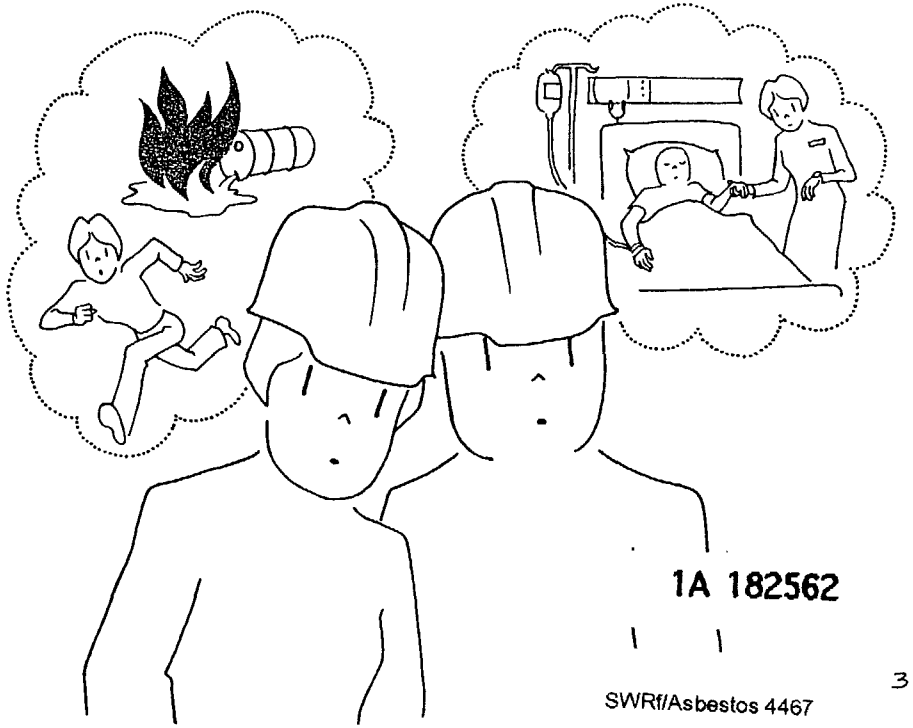
Because 25 million American workers are exposed to chemical hazards every day. Many of today's chemicals threaten:

YOUR SAFETY

Unless properly handled, many chemicals can cause injury or death due to fire, explosion or other serious accident.

YOUR HEALTH

Exposure to certain chemicals can cause serious health problems, including injuries and disabling illnesses.



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HOW DO I KNOW if a chemical is DANGEROUS ?

It's the job of the chemical manufacturers and importers to:

REVIEW
all available scientific evidence on chemicals and their hazards. This means that each chemical you use is studied for its potential to injure or harm you.

REPORT
information about potential dangers to the users of these chemicals.

WARNING
CONTAINS HAZARDOUS MATERIAL
CHEMICAL NAME
NFPA CODE

You -- and your employer -- should be able to rely on this information about chemical hazards.

HOW DO I GET INFORMATION on chemical hazards ?

Your employer has a program for getting information on chemical hazards to you. This information is given to you in 3 important ways:

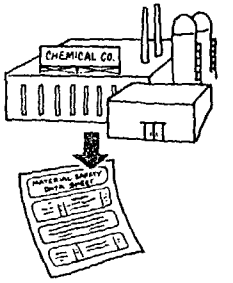
CONTAINER LABELS

In the workplace, containers of hazardous chemicals must carry special warning labels.



MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS

These describe the hazards of the chemicals you use on the job. They're developed for each chemical by its manufacturer (or importer).



EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Your employer will tell you about the hazard communication program and train you to handle hazardous chemicals safely.



YOU'LL ALSO BE INFORMED ABOUT:

- chemical hazards in each work area
- the hazards of non-routine work tasks
- chemical hazards in unlabeled pipes.

Let's look more closely at each of the 3 main parts.

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CONTAINER LABELS

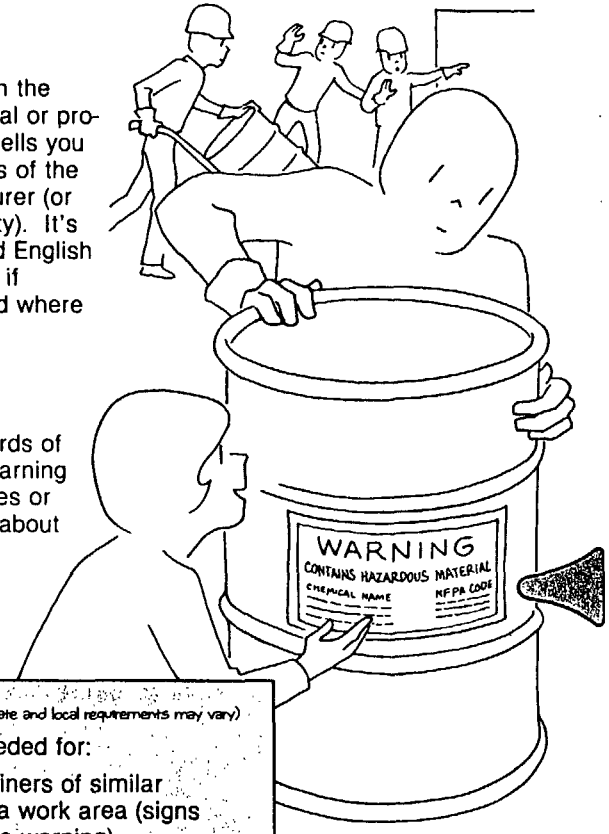
All containers of hazardous chemicals in the workplace must:

BE LABELED,

tagged or marked with the identity of the chemical or product. The label also tells you the name and address of the chemical's manufacturer (or other responsible party). It's written in easy-to-read English (plus other languages if desired) and displayed where you can easily see it.

WARN YOU

of the particular hazards of the chemical. This warning may be words, pictures or symbols that tell you about the hazards you face.



EXCEPTIONS (state and local requirements may vary)

Labels are not needed for:

- stationary containers of similar contents within a work area (signs provide adequate warning)
- portable containers of hazardous chemicals intended for immediate use
- stationary process equipment if it has written, easy-access hazard information
- pipes or piping systems.

HOW TO READ AND INTERPRET LABELS

Chemical warning labels may include this information:

IDENTITY OF THE CHEMICAL – a code number, chemical or trade name.	**SIGNAL WORD** – telling you the degree of hazard: "caution!" "warning!" or "danger!"	**HAZARD STATEMENT** – telling you the major hazards you face: "extremely flammable" or "harmful if inhaled."
PRECAUTIONS – what to do to avoid injury or illness: "avoid breathing" or "wash thoroughly after handling."	**INSTRUCTIONS IN CASE OF EXPOSURE** – first-aid information telling you what to do if you're exposed to a chemical.	**ANTIDOTES** – measures that can be used by a medical layperson to counteract the effects of chemical exposure.
FIRE, SPILL, LEAK INSTRUCTIONS – how to put out or control fires, clean up leaks or spills.	**NOTES TO PHYSICIAN** – information for physicians in case someone is exposed to a chemical.	**HANDLING AND STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS** – special procedures for handling and storing chemical containers.

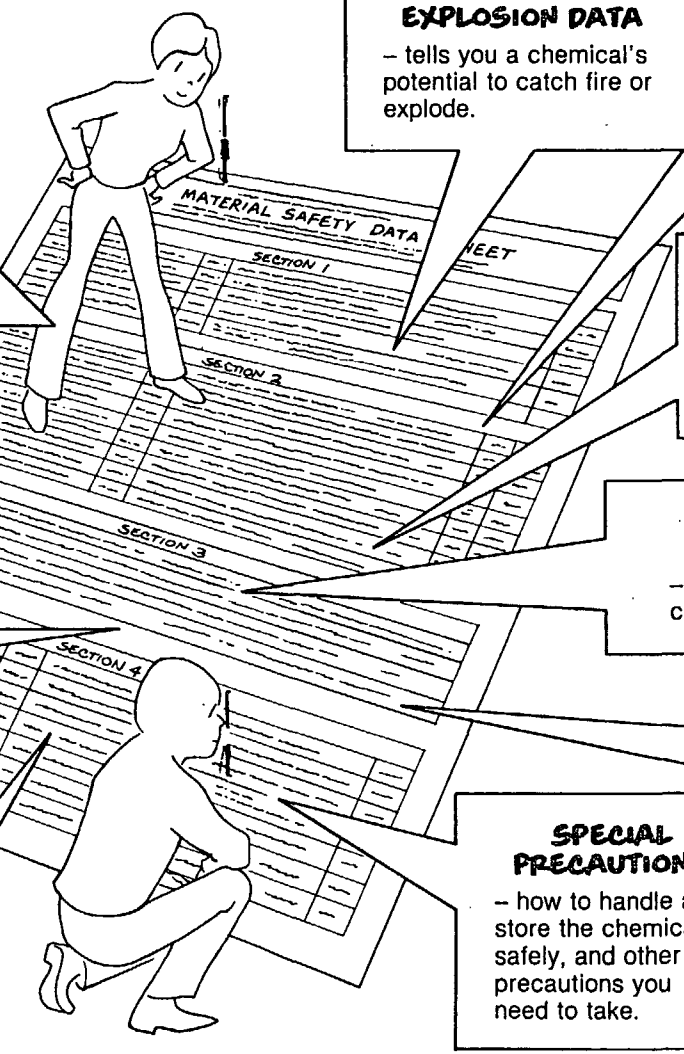
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How to read and interpret

MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS

An MSDS gives you detailed information on a chemical and its hazards.



IDENTIFIERS
– tell you the source of the MSDS, and the name of the chemical or product (by formula, chemical family and trade name or synonym).

HAZARDOUS INGREDIENTS
– you're given the names of hazardous ingredients in mixtures such as paints, alloys, fluxes.

FIRE AND EXPLOSION DATA
– tells you a chemical's potential to catch fire or explode.

HEALTH HAZARD DATA
– lists the PEL, tells the signs and symptoms of overexposure, and gives emergency first-aid procedures.

REACTIVITY DATA
– tells how stable a chemical is and what materials it should not come in contact with.

PERMISSIBLE EXPOSURE LIMITS (PELs)
– indicates the average amount of a chemical you can safely be exposed to, usually over an 8-hour shift.

SPILL OR LEAK PROCEDURES
– what steps to take if a chemical leaks or spills.

SPECIAL PROTECTION
– tells you the protective equipment you must use in order to avoid exposure, and details on required ventilation.

PHYSICAL DATA
– information about the chemical's appearance, smell and physical properties (boiling point, vapor density, volatility, etc.).

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS
– how to handle and store the chemical safely, and other precautions you need to take.

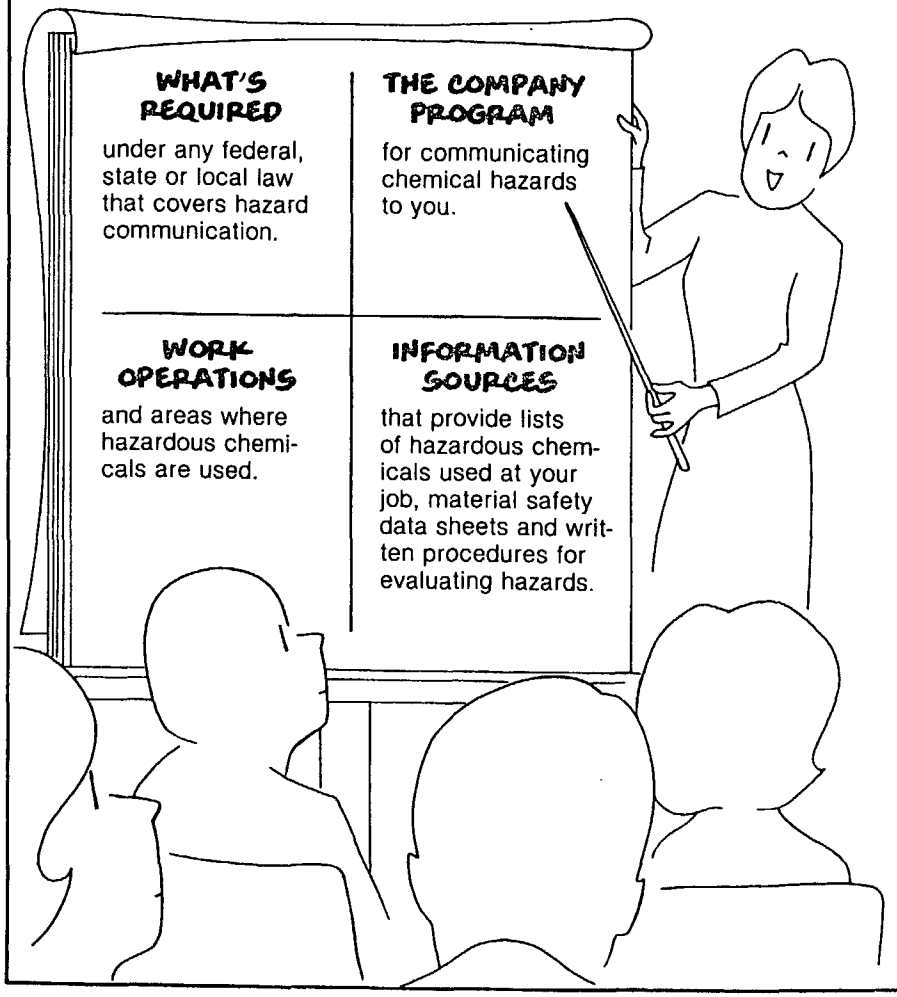
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INFORMATION AND TRAINING

is also a vital part of hazard communication.

Your employer will discuss with you:



WHAT'S REQUIRED

under any federal, state or local law that covers hazard communication.

THE COMPANY PROGRAM

for communicating chemical hazards to you.

WORK OPERATIONS

and areas where hazardous chemicals are used.

INFORMATION SOURCES

that provide lists of hazardous chemicals used at your job, material safety data sheets and written procedures for evaluating hazards.

Your employer's training program will enable you to learn:

HOW TO READ AND INTERPRET

the information on MSDSs and container labels, and how to obtain and use chemical hazard information.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

about chemicals you use in the workplace.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

to protect yourself from on-the-job chemical hazards.

SAFETY PRACTICES

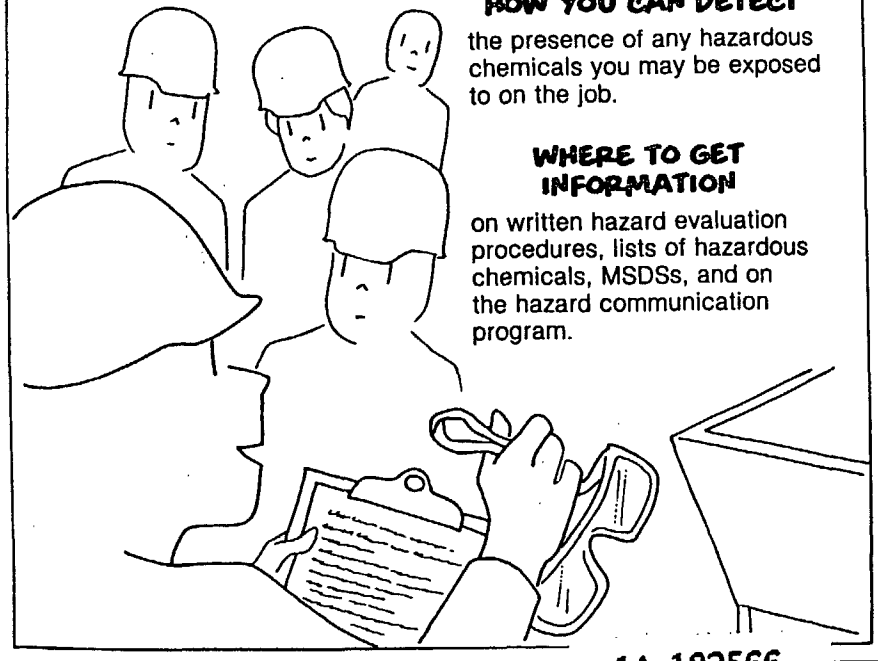
such as how to use personal protective equipment that will protect you from exposure to chemical hazards.

HOW YOU CAN DETECT

the presence of any hazardous chemicals you may be exposed to on the job.

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION

on written hazard evaluation procedures, lists of hazardous chemicals, MSDSs, and on the hazard communication program.



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What can I do to PROTECT MYSELF from chemical hazards ?

You can prevent accidental exposure to hazardous chemicals. Follow these basic procedures:

PRACTICE SAFE WORK HABITS

Obey all safety rules – never take shortcuts when handling, using, storing or transporting hazardous chemicals.

BE INFORMED

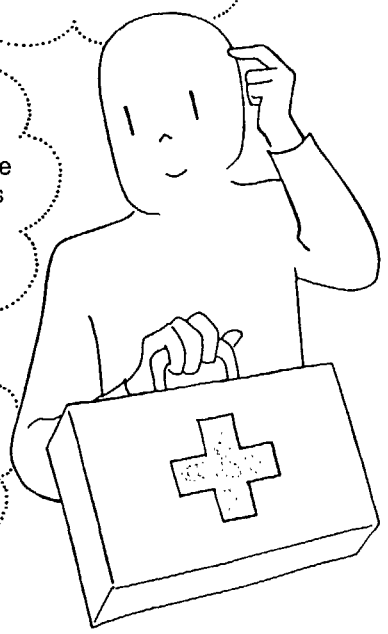
Hazard communication is for your protection. Make the most of it. Know how to use the available information on chemical hazards.

USE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Make sure you use the right protective clothing and equipment and that it fits properly. Follow approved practices for cleaning and storing, and report any damaged equipment.

KNOW EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Learn how to use first-aid supplies, eyewash and emergency showers. Know emergency alarm signals and procedures.



KNOW FIRST AID PROCEDURES

POISONING (INHALED)



- Remove victim to fresh air.
- Give artificial respiration, if breathing has stopped.
- Perform CPR if breathing and pulse have stopped, and if you're properly trained.

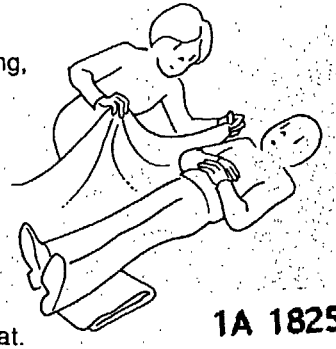


CHEMICAL BURNS

- Immediately flush exposed skin with water; continue for 15-20 minutes. Don't scrub. Remove contaminated clothing.
- Cover burn with sterile dressing.
- Don't apply ointments or neutralizing solution.
- Flush eye for at least 15 minutes if exposed to chemicals.

SHOCK

- Check for symptoms, including clammy, pale skin; rapid, faint pulse; quick, irregular breathing; weakness; nausea.
- Treat causes of shock (stopped breathing, burns, etc.).
- Keep victim quiet and lying down with feet slightly elevated (unless victim has difficulty breathing).
- Place victim on side, if unconscious. (Do not move victim if you suspect a neck or spine injury, unless absolutely necessary.)
- Cover only enough to maintain body heat.



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Seek medical help promptly for all medical emergencies!

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SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE for controlling chemical hazards in the workplace ?

You and your employer are responsible. It's your employer's job to provide you with the information you need about chemical hazards and to adopt safe work practices. It's your job to learn about chemical hazards and to use the protective measures provided for you.

Will hazard communication protect me from the **LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS** of chemicals ?

Hazard communication is designed to lower your exposure to chemical hazards in order to reduce injuries and illnesses, including chronic illness.

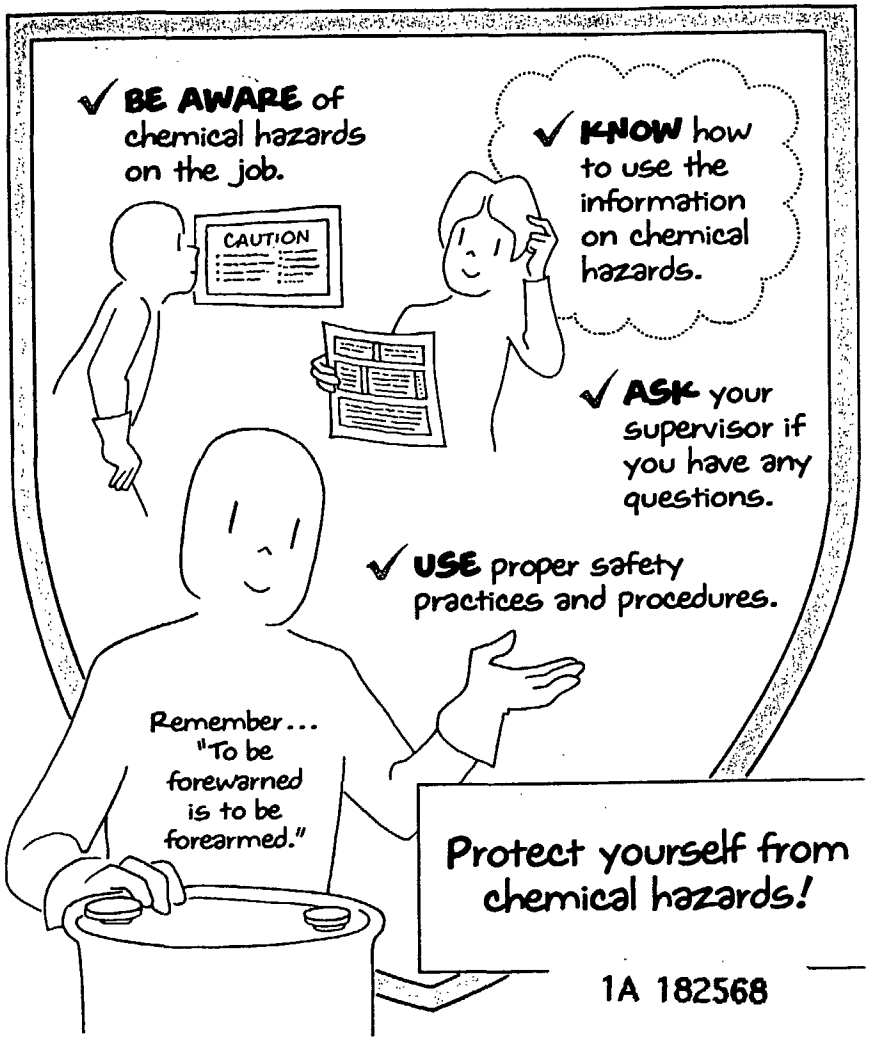
WHERE can I **FIND OUT MORE** about hazard communication ?

You (or your representative) can simply ask your supervisor for it.



Soo--

Hazard communication is the KEY TO CHEMICAL SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE



Protect yourself from chemical hazards!

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