

TURN-KEY'S ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS



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This quarterly newsletter has been developed to share information about health and environmental issues.

OSHA, GHS, and Your MSDSs and Labels

OH&S Occupational Health and Safety—Jytte Syska, Erin McVeigh, Tamie Webber

On September 30, 2009, OSHA released its proposal to modify the current Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) to conform with the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). The proposed PSHA revisions include both philosophical and tactical changes to Hazard Communication that have far-reaching implications for Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and the authoring, publishing, distribution and management of labels. The proposal also includes revised criteria for the classification of hazardous chemicals, as well as changes to definitions and terms used in the standards and new training requirements for employees. When the final rule is promulgated, companies will face many challenges, including re-evaluating how their substances and mixtures are classified, reissuing MSDSs and labels and training staff as appropriate.

Companies can do several things now to prepare for OSHA's promulgation of the final rule, including taking stock of their existing compliance tools and associated chemical regulatory information to ensure they address the proposed new requirements.

Achieving conformance with GHS in the US is expected to be quite cumbersome. Strong processes, applications, systems, and service providers are needed to support the various aspects of compliance management for GHS.

New ANSI Fall Protection Standards: What They Mean to You

OH&S Occupational Health & Safety - Thorn Kramer, P.E., CSP, Nolan Miller

Regulations clearly are not enough since, after more than 70 years of standards, rules, and regulations, workers still fall to their deaths in increasing numbers. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, fall fatalities increased 28 percent in the same time period (1995-2007) that overall workplace fatalities decreased 12 percent.

Learning how to minimize the risk of potentially dangerous or fatal fall hazards allows organization to take a proactive approach to worker safety.

The publication of the ANSI Z359 standards provides more guidance than any single resource for developing and implementing a fall protection program. This information is critical because falls affect the quality of life for the worker and the bottom line for the company. The goal is to reduce risk and improve safety for work at heights. Although it is beneficial to abate a fall

hazard successfully, without a true fall protection program, you may be spending resources on solutions that do little to reduce your overall risk.

The Program elements outlined in the ANSI Z359.2 –2007 are:

- Policies, duties, training
- Fall protection procedures
- Eliminating and controlling fall hazards
- Rescue procedures
- Incident investigations
- Evaluating program effectiveness.

These standards are critical for creating a program that reduces risk and improves safety for work at heights. When one or more of the elements is missing, a program can become ineffective. To provide further guidance, these family of standards added new sections focusing on active fall protection in November 2009.

Turn-Key Environmental Consultants, Inc (TKEC) Services

TKEC specializes in indoor air quality, industrial compliance, environmental planning, and environmental health and safety issues. Utilizing proven scientific strategies and methods, our skilled and experienced personnel solve diverse environmental problems from the simple to the complex. Our goal is to provide high quality, responsive, practical, timely and legally defensible solutions for our clients. Staff members are certified in their various fields including Certified Microbial Remediation Supervisor, certified professional geologist and new ASTM standards for Phase I Environmental Site Assessments.

Asbestos: Building inspections, technical & contract specs, health risk assessments, abatement response actions, bulk air sampling and analysis.

Industrial Compliance: RCRA, CERCLA, OSHA, TSCA, SARA Title III, Storm Water Discharge, Hazardous Communication Programs, Industrial Audits, Hazardous Waste Sampling & Analysis, Hazardous Waste Permitting & Disposal.

Underground/Aboveground Storage

Tanks: Soil vapor testing, groundwater monitoring, remedial investigation-feasibility studies, corrective action plans, remediation cleanup of soil/groundwater.

Real Estate Property Assessment:

Phase I Environmental Site Investigations, Phase II Environmental Site investigations/characterizations, Phase III Site Clean up.

Mold: Microbial (mold/bacteria) investigations, Mold sampling & analysis with remedial design & oversight.

Water: Sampling & analysis, groundwater well development & monitoring, hydrologic balance investigations.

Environmental Health & Safety: Site Inspections, on-site training, written safety procedures & plans, health & safety compliance audits.

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California Study Finds Excessive Formaldehyde Levels in New Homes

Indoor Environment Connections - Tom Scarlett

A study by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) concluded that indoor concentrations of formaldehyde in recently built homes often exceed health-based exposure guidelines for indoor air contaminants, due to the many indoor sources of formaldehyde. Also, indoor concentrations of a few other chemicals such as benzene, naphthalene, and 1,4-dichlorobenzene also exceeded exposure guidelines in some cases. The researchers recommended that new homes should have mechanical outdoor air ventilation systems for the purpose of controlling indoor air contaminants.

The multi-season study of ventilation and indoor air quality looked at 108 homes all built within the last four years. The ARB and the California Energy Commission sponsored the study, which was conducted by a team lead by Indoor Environmental Engineering Inc. The team found that single-family detached home were build relatively airtight with very low outdoor air exchange rates with the homes internal air. These factors contribute to high concentrations of indoor air contaminates.