EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

July 2012

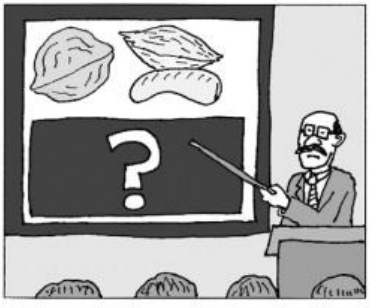
news & notes

GHS HAZARD SYMBOLS OR PICTOGRAMS

On GHS-compliant labels, pictograms include a black symbol and other graphic elements, which convey specific information about the chemical's hazards. The symbols appear on a white background framed within a diamond-shaped box with a red border.

View the eight mandatory standardized hazard symbols used in pictograms at www.safety.blr.com. Here is what they mean:

1. **Health Hazard,** which is used for these chemical hazards: carcinogen, respiratory sensitiz- er, reproductive toxicity, target organ toxicity, mutagenicity, and aspiration toxicity.
2. **Flame,** used for chemicals that are flammables, self-reactives, pyrophorics, self-heating, emitters of flammable gas, and organic peroxides.
3. **Exclamation Mark,** used for these hazards: irritant, skin sensitizer, contact, acute toxicity, narcotic effects, and respiratory tract irritation.
4. **Gas Cylinder,** used for a sub- stance that is a compressed, liquefied, or dissolved gas under pressure at 29 pounds per square inch or more.
5. **Flame Over Circle,** used for a substance that is an oxider.
6. **Corrosion,** used for substances that cause skin burns, eye damage, or destroy metals.
7. **Skull and Crossbones,** used for substances with a hazard of acute toxicity.
8. **Exploding Bomb,** used for sub- stances that are explosives, self- reactive, or organic peroxides.



OSHA introduces its new hazard symbol: "Are you nuts? Don't touch this."

Understanding the New Chemical Labels

Know the changes under GHS

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) chemical labeling requirements are part of its Hazard Communication Standard (HazCom), which is designed to ensure that you can identify and understand the hazards of chemical substances in the workplace. HazCom was revised to align with the Globally Harmonized System for Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). Here's how to:

Identify a chemical using its label
The chemical label must contain both a product identifier for the chemical and supplier identification information. The product identifier is the name or number that allows you to identify the chemical in the container. Supplier identification must include the name, address, and telephone number for the company supplying the chemical.

Know what precautions to take with the chemical
Precautionary statements describe recommended measures to be taken to minimize or prevent harmful effects from exposure to a chemical or improper storage or handling. Four types of precautionary statements appear on a chemical label. They are:

- **Prevention.** For example, "Wash thoroughly after handling."
- **Response.** For example, "If swallowed, immediately call a poison center."
- **Storage.** For example, "Store locked up."
- **Disposal.** For example, "Dispose of in accordance with local, regional, national, and international regulations as specified."

Interpret the signal word on the label
The chemical label will include one of two signal words that identify the relative severity of the hazard presented. The words alert you to a potential hazard. For example:

- **Danger** is the more serious of the signal words and indicates a higher level of hazard.
- **Warning** is less serious than danger and indicates a lower hazard level.

Interpret the label's hazard statement
Hazard statements describe the nature of the hazard and, where appropriate, the degree of the hazard. The hazard statement can include information on fatal or toxic exposures, organ damage, and routes of exposure. For example, a hazard statement could say:

- Highly flammable liquid and vapor.
- May cause liver and kidney damage.

See "news & notes" for how to read hazard symbols or pictograms on chemical labels.

news & notes

FATALITY COMMUNICATION

A new OSHA directive guides agency representatives in communicating with family members about investigations following a workplace fatality. OSHA personnel are instructed to speak to relatives early in the process, establish a point of contact, and maintain a working relationship with the family.

Under the directive, OSHA will contact the family to explain the process, timeline, and updates. Once an investigation is closed, OSHA will explain findings to the family and address any questions. If an employer has been issued citations, agency personnel will provide a copy of the citations to the family.

Employers are required to notify the agency within 8 hours of a workplace fatality, including fatal heart attacks that occur at work. The reports may be made by telephone or in person to the nearest area office or by calling the toll-free number 800-321-6742.

WHICH HEALTH ISSUE COSTS MORE?

If you guessed obesity, you guessed right. A study in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine analyzed the additional costs of smoking and obesity among more than 30,000 Mayo Clinic employees and retirees. All had continuous health insurance coverage between 2001 and 2007.

Both obesity and smoking were associated with excess health costs. Compared to nonsmokers, average health costs were $1,275 higher for smokers. And obese people averaged an additional $1,850 more than normal-weight individuals. For those with morbid obesity, costs were up to $5,500 per year.

How To Avoid a "Dust-Up"

Take precautions around combustible dusts

The dust of any substance that will keep burning when you light it will combust under certain circumstances. Two things are necessary:

1. The dust must be fine enough, *and*
2. It must be mixed with the right amount of air.

Wood dust, coal dust, and metal dusts that are fine enough to pass through a 500-mesh screen, such as magnesium, aluminum, and bronze powders, can explode. If there is much dust around, you usually get two explosions plus a fire. The first explosion can be small, but if it kicks more dust into the air, there can be a bigger explosion.

Dust in open air will create a big burst of flame, but closed in, it builds up pressures that no buildings and few tanks can take. Dust explosions are preventable. Operations and processes that may produce combustible dusts should be enclosed so that the dust can't get out. Exhausts to catch the dusts and carry them safely away should be provided. Dust that does get out should be quickly cleaned up with a soft fiber push broom or vacuum cleaner. Never use a household-type broom. Water can be used to wash the dust away if the building design allows.

Apply these three principles to prevent dust explosions:

1. Keep dust out of the air as much as possible.
2. Keep the dust cleaned up.
3. Keep sources of ignition away.

Swimming: The Perfect Exercise?

This summer sport has year-round benefits

It's summertime and swimming is high on your activity list. Why? Because it's wet and it's cool and it's fun! But swimming is also beneficial to your overall health in many ways. For example, it:

- **Burns calories** and in conjunction with a healthful diet, it can help you—and your family—lose weight and/or maintain a healthful weight
- **Builds muscle mass** and reduces body fat
- **Builds endurance** so you'll no longer have to catch your breath after climbing stairs or carrying the groceries in
- **Improves cardiovascular health** by increasing blood flow, which can lower blood pressure and increase oxygen consumption in your blood
- **Is a non-impact and low-stress activity** so it doesn't put strain on bones or joints
- **Is great for rehabilitation** from injury or for treatment of chronic conditions such as arthritis or back problems
- **Is a life-long sport** that anyone from toddlers to retirees can enjoy

Professional organizations from the American Heart Association to the Arthritis Foundation recommend swimming and other water sports. So why not find ways to stay in the water year-round?