

A Safe Workplace

A Workplace Safety and Health Manual for Your Community

Section: II-C	Health and Safety Management	Page 1 of 4 Approved By: Harvey Bostrom
Subject:	Plan to Control Chemical and Biological Hazards	Effective: April 01, 2005 Revised: April 1, 2011

The Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulations, section 7.4(5)(f) states "a workplace safety & health program must include a plan for the control of any biological or chemical substance used, produced, stored or disposed of at the workplace."

The Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulations, Part 35 places duties on councils where hazardous materials are used, the requirement for labels and material safety data sheets (MSDS) and training.

The Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulations, Part 36 focuses on assessment, risk control and training related to chemical and biological hazards.

Chemical hazards include, but are not limited to:

- spills (chlorine)
- dusts (dust from sawing)
- fumes (fumes from welding)
- mists (mists from water and wastewater processes)
- smoke (smoke from grinding metal, fiberglass or wood furnishings)
- vapours (vapours from combining various chemicals)
- insulations (asbestos, urea formaldehyde, zoneolite)

Biological hazards include, but are not limited to:

- micro-organisms (bacteria or viruses from infectious people or animals)
- fungi (may grow in moist areas or ventilation systems)
- parasites (live in the bodies of plants or animals)
- plants (substances given off by some plants can cause allergies. Several plants contain poisonous substances)

All records of chemicals and biological substances covered under WHMIS must be retained in the designated filing system, for 30 years.

Training

Council must ensure that every employee that works with a controlled product (i.e. chlorine) or is in the proximity of a controlled product is provided with WHMIS training. A "controlled product" is defined as any product, material or substance specified by *The Hazardous Products Act*.

A Safe Workplace

A Workplace Safety and Health Manual for Your Community

Section: II-C	Health and Safety Management	Page 2 of 4
		Approved By: Harvey Bostrom
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WHMIS training will outline the following:

- how each substance causes harm;
- storage of chemicals;
- labeling of containers;
- material safety data sheets (MSDS);
- what harm is involved;
- how serious the harm can be;
- the risks of being harmed;
- how to reduce exposure;
- how to prevent harm; and
- what to do during an accident or emergency. (The section entitled Emergency Response Plan found in this manual should be reviewed as it relates to an accident with a hazardous substance).

See the section in this manual entitled Workplace Safety and Health Training Requirements for further information on training. Employees should also be trained in Transportation of Dangerous Goods, if applicable.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

Council should appoint a responsible person to ensure that MSDS are kept in a binder in the applicable workplace but also centrally stored in the council administration office. The documents must be kept current and must be available for all hazardous chemicals.

A copy of all MSDS sheets for controlled substances must be stored at the fire hall and in council office for reference during an emergency.

Labels

Council should appoint a responsible person to ensure that every container of a controlled product received from a supplier has a supplier label. If a controlled product arrives at the workplace it can be stored but not used until the supplier label is obtained.

Until the supplier container is empty and cleaned the supplier label must not be removed, destroyed or changed. A workplace label can be used if this label becomes unreadable. Council should ensure that empty containers are disposed of appropriately.

A Safe Workplace

A Workplace Safety and Health Manual for Your Community

Section: II-C	Health and Safety Management	Page 3 of 4
Subject:	Plan to Control Chemical and Biological Hazards	Approved By: Harvey Bostrom
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A workplace label should:

- identify the controlled product;
- provide information for the safe handling of the product;
and
- indicate that a MSDS, if supplied or produced, is available.

Hazard Assessment

Each time a new chemical is introduced into the workplace a hazard assessment should be completed within 15 days. The attached Hazard Assessment Form should be used for this purpose. The Department of Labour and Immigration, Workplace Safety and Health Division should be contacted regarding unknown chemical hazards.

Related information on hazard assessment can be found in the section in this manual entitled Inspection Process and Hazard Recognition and Control System.

Plan to Control Chemical and Biological Hazards - Prevention Plan

Part 36 of *The Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulations* requires that council develop, maintain and implement a written **prevention plan** to prevent or eliminate health hazards to employees from each controlled product in the workplace.

Basically, a **prevention plan** is a written document which outlines the steps that a council must complete before achieving full compliance with the regulation. The department will assist in the development of your prevention plan. The following steps should be taken to develop your community specific Plan to Control Chemical and Biological Hazards:

1. Identify and list all chemical and biological substances at the workplace. Next, identify and list any other substances employees may be concerned about. Use the attached Sample Inventory Inspection Checklist. This Checklist **must** be kept current at all times.
2. Based on the Inventory Inspection Checklist, conduct a hazard assessment for each hazardous substance. Think about where, when, how, why, whether the substance can cause harm and how serious the harm can be. Use information from MSDS, suppliers, industry publications, employees' concerns and regulatory requirements. Complete the Hazard Assessment Form as attached.

The following steps should be followed utilizing the assessment information:

A Safe Workplace

A Workplace Safety and Health Manual for Your Community

Section: II-C	Health and Safety Management	Page 4 of 4
		Approved By: Harvey Bostrom
Subject:	Plan to Control Chemical and Biological Hazards	Effective: April 01, 2005
		Revised: April 1, 2011

3. Reduce or prevent employee exposure and contamination of employees in the workplace whenever reasonable and practical by following the handling procedures identified on the MSDS.
4. When reasonable and practical, eliminate hazardous substances, or replace them with less hazardous ones whenever substitutes are available. Use information from suppliers to help you decide what to do. Ensure the Inventory Inspection Checklist is updated.
5. Develop safe work procedures or practices.

Once the Plan to Control Chemical and Biological Hazards is completed it **must** form part of this manual.

Community Responsibilities:

Council must ensure that:

- employees receive WHMIS training;
- MSDS are kept current and stored where controlled substances are located;
- copy of MSDS binder is kept at the fire hall and council office;
- labels are kept current and in accordance with regulations;
- Inventory Inspection Checklist is kept current at all times; and
- a Plan to Control Chemicals and Biological Hazards is developed and kept current.

Attachments

- Sample Inventory Inspection Checklist
- Hazard Assessment Form

Note additional information can be found on the (Department of Labour and Immigration) website www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/publications as follows:

- WHMIS Guideline
- A Guideline on Chemical Handling and Storage
- Plan for Controlling Chemical and Biological Hazards in the Workplace