

Canada moves to Adopt Globally Harmonized System for Classification and Labeling Hazardous Substances

The Canada Gazette of August 9/14 announced Canada's official adoption of GHS by putting forward the proposed Hazardous product Regulations. The *Controlled Products Regulations* will be repealed and replaced with the *Hazardous Products Regulations*. This will align Canada with the USA which is also moving to GHS. The Hazardous Products Regulations will be based on the GHS standards for classification and labeling of hazardous products. This is quite different from the current WHMIS requirements. There is a new 16 format required for MSDS and a different classification procedure for chemicals and mixtures. New pictograms will be required for labels.

There is a 30 day comment period for this proposed regulation which ends September 8/14. The government hopes to finalize the new regulations by Dec.1/14 with an implementation date of June 1, 2015. There will be a transition period which has yet to be announced. Complete details of the proposed Hazardous Products Regulations are found at:

<http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2014/2014-08-09/pdf/g1-14832.pdf>

Major differences to WHMIS include the elimination of the hatched border and entirely new pictograms and risk phrases are to be included on the label. MSDS will have a new format and be called Safety Data Sheets – SDS. Classification will be more structured and uniform risk phrases will be required. There will be no 3 year SDS renewal period but labels and SDS must be adjusted within 90 days of new information becoming available. English/French will be required on labels and SDS must be available in both languages. There are more hazardous product classifications. The Ingredient Disclosure List which specified which hazardous chemicals must be disclosed on the MSDS has been eliminated. It is felt that these would be captured under the new classification protocol. Entirely new SDS and labels will be required so SDA renewals should be to the GHS format. New labels will be required though there may be some transition period allowed. CSSA has asked to be notified when these timelines have been established.

In the business impact analysis, the government concluded that there would be long term savings with the label and SDS harmonization particularly with our major trading partners: US, EU and Japan. Products could be more freely imported and exported. They did recognize that there would be immediate cost impacts related to the SDS authoring and label printing as well as the training of the workforce. Consultation was held with industry, business and workplace representatives over the past several years. These details are provided in the link above.

The changes proposed over the last several years are finally about to take place. These will be major changes and they will be costly.

