

TITLE: PROVISION AND USE OF MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS	
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PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines on the provision, location, use and training in the use of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs).

An MSDS is a document prepared by the manufacturer or supplier of a hazardous substance.

The MSDS provides a range of important information, including:

- the ingredients of the product;
- the health effects of the product and first aid instructions;
- precautions to follow when you use the product; and
- safe handling and storage information.

There are two key steps in obtaining detailed health and safety information on chemicals stored and used:

1. Reading the label; and
2. Reading the MSDS.

For those chemicals that are not hazardous substances, other information may be available which is not set out in the format of an MSDS.

In the workplace, the MSDS should be the recognised information source, which underpins the overall risk management program to control exposure to hazardous and dangerous materials.

SCOPE:

This Guideline applies to:

- Lifesavers, patrol captains/club captains and team leaders
- Lifeguards and lifeguard supervisors
- Coastal authorities and managers

GUIDELINE DESCRIPTION:

1.0 Provision of MSDSs

1.1 A person who purchases a substance for use at work has a right to insist on receiving an MSDS.

1.2 If the supplier refuses to provide an MSDS, the purchaser should insist on evidence that the substance is not hazardous.

1.3 An MSDS should be provided in the workplace on or about the first supply of a hazardous substance.

1.4 If an MSDS is not available, the supervisor should be informed as soon as possible.

1.5 MSDSs are available from:

- The chemical supplier

- WorkCover Office
- On the Internet at www.msds.com.au

1.6 A copy of an MSDS should be retained for each product used.

1.7 The MSDS should be:

- placed in an on-site register;
- stored in a place that is accessible to everyone; and
- Less than 5 years old.

2.0 Use of MSDS

The MSDS can be used to:

- identify if the product is a hazardous substance;
- assist in carrying out risk assessments;
- find out how to use a product safely;
- check that all products are being used in the right way for the right job;
- decide whether any improvements should be made to machinery or procedures;
- decide whether any monitoring for airborne contamination should be done;
- check that emergency equipment and procedures are adequate; and
- develop on-the-job training.

3.0 Lifesavers/lifeguards and MSDS

3.1 Lifesavers and lifeguards should read the MSDS carefully and complete a risk assessment.

3.2 Lifesavers and lifeguards should be familiar with the location and contents of each MSDS used in their area and trained in the correct use.

DEFINITIONS:

MSDS – Material Safety Data Sheet

Material Safety Data Sheet means ‘a document prepared by the manufacturer or importer of a hazardous substance that describes the substance’s identity, chemical and physical properties, health hazard information, precautions for use and safe handling information’.

REFERENCES:

Australian Coastal Public Safety Guidelines

- DG1900: Storage and handling – dangerous goods
- DG1901: Fuel storage and handling
- DG1910: Dangerous goods register
- DG1911: Chemical substances register
- DG1913: Incident investigation and reporting

Material Safety Data Sheets for hazardous substances – Fact Sheet 17c, Comcare, Australian Government.

Material Safety Data Sheets – Information Bulletin 20, WorkCover Corporation, South Australia, April 2004.

Material Safety Data Sheets, Life Saving Victoria, July 2005.

MSDS.COM.AU, www.msds.com.au, online collection of free Australian Material Safety Data Sheets

National Code of Practice for the Preparation of Material Safety Data Sheets – 2nd Edition, National Occupational Health and Safety Commission, Australian Government, 2003.

APPENDICES:

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