

Chapter 7

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)



What is WHMIS?

- ❑ It is a system designed to ensure that all employers obtain the information that they need to inform and train their employees properly about hazardous materials used in the workplace.
- ❑ WHMIS is consistent with the worker's "right to know" more about safety and health hazards of materials used in the workplace.
- ❑ WHMIS only applies to products that meet certain criteria, referred to as **controlled products**.



WHMIS comprises three major elements:

1) Labels

2) Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)

3) Worker Education

WHMIS labels provide the essential information that a person needs in order to handle a particular product safely.

MSDSs provide Basic technical information about a product's physical characteristics and its hazardous properties.

The **Worker Education** element ensures that workers are able to apply the information to protect worker health and safety.



1. Labels

- **Supplier labels** provide seven (7) pieces of information:
 - Product Identification (brand name, code name or chemical name)
 - WHMIS Hazard Symbols for each of product's **hazard classes**
 - Risk Phrases (examples)
 - Precautionary Statements - these are precautions to be taken when using or being exposed to the product (examples)
 - First Aid Measures
 - a statement advising that a MSDS is available
 - Manufacturer and Supplier (Name and Address)



2. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)

- **Product Information**
- Hazardous Ingredients
- Physical Data
- Fire or Explosion Hazard
- Reactivity Data
- Toxicological Properties (health effects)
- Preventive Measures
- First Aid Measures
- Preparation Information



3. Worker Education

- All persons who work with controlled products must be provided with WHMIS worker education.
- WHMIS Worker Education includes four (4) areas of instruction:
 - **WHMIS Labels and MSDSs**
 - **Hazard Information**
 - **Identification Codes**
 - **Procedures for safe use, storage and handling and disposal of controlled products.**



Controlled Products

- WHMIS applies only to controlled products, those that meet certain criteria. There are six (6) classes of controlled products (see **WHMIS Hazard Classes**) and include:
 - Compressed Gas
 - Flammable and Combustible Material
 - Poisonous and Infectious Material
 - Corrosive Material
 - Dangerously Reactive Material



Exemptions from WHMIS Legislation

- **The following products are excluded from all aspects of WHMIS legislation:**
- Wood and products made of wood
- Tobacco and products made of tobacco
- Manufactured articles
- Dangerous materials while they are covered by TDG legislation (while in transit)
- Hazardous wastes (except that safe storage and handling are required)

The following list of products are excluded from the supplier aspects of WHMIS:

- Explosives
- Cosmetics, devices, foods and drugs
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Radioactive materials
- Consumer products

