



The Importance of Safety Data Sheets

One of the three basic rights that every employee has is the **right to know, or the right to be informed about, actual and potential dangers in the workplace.**

As such, every employee should know how to access Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) through QRP's MSDS Online system. **Ask if you don't know or if you would like a refresher!**

Comprised of 16 sections, SDSs are summary documents that tell users:

- What the hazards of the product are;
- How to use the product safely;
- What to expect if the recommendations are not followed;
- How to recognize symptoms of exposure;
- What to do if emergencies occur.

Every product that is classified as a "hazardous product" under WHMIS that is intended for use, handling or storage in a workplace in Canada must have a SDS.

As a worker, when would I use a SDS?

Always be familiar with the hazards of a product **before** you start using it.

- Know the hazards (Section 2);
- Understand the safe handling and storage instructions (Section 7);
- Understand what to do in an emergency (Sections 4, 5 & 6).

RIGHT TO KNOW INFORMATION STATION

SAFETY DATA SHEETS FOR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

You can think of the SDS as having four main purposes:

1. **Identification:** for the product and supplier.
2. **Hazards:** physical (fire and reactivity) and health.
3. **Prevention:** steps you can take to work safely, reduce or prevent exposure, or in an emergency.
4. **Response:** appropriate responses in various situations (e.g. first-aid, fire, accidental release).

A few things to know:

- Ensure the product is being used the way the manufacturer intended.
- Know that the SDS may not cover specifics required at your workplace (e.g. the SDS may not specify what type of respirator must be used, just that a respirator is needed).
- If exposure to a hazardous product occurs and medical aid/treatment is sought, bring a copy of the SDS to the medical professional.