

## Understanding Hazardous Chemical Labels

This fact sheet provides information on how to understand the new labelling system for hazardous chemicals. By understanding and following all information and instructions on a chemical label, all chemicals should be able to be used safely in the Men's Shed.

### What is a hazardous chemical label?

The label

- Is affixed to, printed on or attached to the container.
- Is also used on pipes and pipe-work used to transfer hazardous chemicals.
- Contains information on identity and proportions of the hazardous chemical and its constituents or ingredients.
- Contains information on the hazards of the chemical, precautions to be followed during its use, handling and storage, and instructions for the safe disposal of the chemical.

You should always read and understand the information on a label **before** using a hazardous chemical.

When using a hazardous chemical you should always refer to the chemical's **Safety Data Sheet (SDS)**, as this contains more detailed information.










### What information should I look for in a label?

Labels will contain the following elements.






- **Pictograms** – these provide a graphical representation of the chemical's hazardous properties. These pictograms are designed to be easily recognised so you can instantly see the hazards associated with a chemical.

There are nine new pictograms, each with a specific meaning. The following table shows these new pictograms and the types of hazards they represent.

#### GHS hazard pictograms

	Severe health hazards		Health hazards		Acute toxicity
	Explosive		Flammable		Oxidising
	Corrosive		Gases under pressure		Environmental hazard

Dangerous goods class labels are those pictograms that are used on dangerous goods containers for their transport by road or rail. Some examples of dangerous goods class labels are shown below.



				
Flammable liquid	Spontaneously combustible	Substances which, in contact with water, emit flammable gases	Oxidising substances	Corrosive

- **Signal words** – these provide an indication of the relative severity of the hazard. The signal words used are **DANGER** or **WARNING**. Danger indicates a higher severity of hazard.
- **Hazard statements** - these describe the nature and severity of the chemical hazard. Examples of hazard statements are:
  - Highly flammable liquid and vapour
  - May cause respiratory irritation
  - May cause cancer
  - Contains gas under pressure
  - Causes severe skin burns and eye damage
- **Precautionary statements** – these describe some recommended measures that should be taken to minimise or eliminate risks during storage, handling, use or disposal of the hazardous chemical. The GHS uses four types of precautionary statement, covering
  - *Prevention* of an incident (for example how to prevent poisoning from a toxic chemical or igniting a flammable liquid)
  - *Response* in the event of an incident (for example providing first aid information if a worker is exposed or instructions to extinguish a fire)
  - *Storage* instructions (for example specific conditions under which the chemical should or should not be stored)
  - *Disposal* (for example referring to any applicable local/state regulations)

**Examples** of precautionary statements are:

- Do not breathe dust/fume/gas/mist/vapours/spray
- Keep away from heat/sparks/open flames/hot surfaces – No smoking
- Get immediate medical advice/attention
- Dispose of contents in accordance with local Regulations

## What does a hazardous chemical label look like?

<b>Flammosol</b>		Product identifier
Contains: Aliphatic hydrocarbons 95% Toxicole 5%		Identity and proportion of each chemical ingredient
<b>500ml</b>		
		Pictograms
<b>DANGER</b>		Signal word
<b>Highly flammable liquid and vapour</b>		Hazard statements
<b>Toxic if swallowed</b>		
<b>Causes skin irritation</b>		
Keep away from sparks and open flames. – No smoking. Wear protective gloves and eye and face protection.	IF SWALLOWED: Immediately call a POISON CENTRE or doctor/physician. Rinse mouth.	
Wash hands thoroughly after handling.	IF ON SKIN (or hair): Take off contaminated clothing and wash before re-use.	Precautionary statements
Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product.	If skin irritation occurs: Get medical advice/attention. Rinse skin using plenty of soap and water.	
Store locked up in well ventilated place. Keep cool.	In case of fire: Use powder for extinction	
Dispose of contents / container in accordance with local regulations.		
Refer to the Safety Data Sheet before use.		Other useful information
Madeup Chemical Company, 999 Chemical Street, Chemical Town, My State. Telephone: 1300 000 000		Name, address and telephone number of the Australian manufacturer or importer.

More information on labelling and other aspects of managing the risks associated with hazardous chemicals can be found on at [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au).

This AMSA resource is based on information provided by



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