**Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) Program**

Every automotive shop should have a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) program. Having this chemical product information readily available develops a safe working environment. It is also the number one OSHA inspection violation. It is an easy safety compliance requirement to meet.

**What is a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)?**

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is a document that contains information on the potential hazards (health, fire, reactivity and environmental) and how to work safely with a chemical product. It is an essential starting point for the development of a complete health and safety program.

It also contains information on the use, storage, handling and emergency procedures related to the hazards of the material. The MSDS contains much more information about the material than the label. It is intended to tell what the hazards of the product are, how to use the product safely, what to expect if the recommendations are not followed, what to do if accidents occur, how to recognize symptoms of overexposure, and what to do if such incidents occur.

Chemical manufacturers & importers are required to obtain or develop an MSDS for each hazardous chemical they produce. ***Distributors are responsible for ensuring that their customers are provided a copy of the MSDS.*** Employers must have an MSDS for each hazardous chemical they use. Employers may rely on the information received from suppliers.

**What is a Compliant MSDS Program?**

MSDS must be readily accessible to employees when in their work areas during their work shifts. This may be accomplished in many different ways. Many employers keep the MSDSs in a RED loose-leaf binder in a central location at the facility. In workplaces with large numbers of chemicals, MSDS information is kept electronically and accessed through computer terminals. As long as employees can get the information when needed, any approach may be used.



**A compliant MSDS program may include:**

1. Designation of person responsible for obtaining and maintaining the MSDSs;

2. How such sheets are to be maintained in the workplace (such as a RED binder) and how employees can obtain access to them when they are in their work area during the workshift;

3. Procedures to follow when the MSDS is not received at the time of the first shipment;

4. A list of all products in the facility (an inventory) that require an MSDS to be maintained.

***Training Opportunity***

A review of the RED binder containing the MSDSs and the information each sheet contains is a good opportunity to meet the requirements of the safety training program.

