

WONDER MAKERS ENVIRONMENTAL

JULY 2012 E-NEWSLETTER

Revisions to OSHA's HazCom Standard Also Affect Asbestos Programs

In our last newsletter we offered a heads-up on changes that are coming to the rules that govern hazard communication programs, which employers are required to utilize to warn their team members about the dangers of chemicals in the workplace. What has passed virtually unnoticed in the summary of the OSHA changes that require a new format for safety data sheets and the use of internationally recognized pictograms on labels is the fact that this new hazard communication regulation also adjusts a number of other OSHA standards. While most of these adjustments are clerical in nature-to make sure that the language on warning signs is consistent with the new global harmonized system (GHS) for hazard communication-they add requirements to what employers must do to warn individuals of hazards.

This renewed push toward communication of known dangers from chemicals will have a broad impact on a large number of people who are covered by the Asbestos Standard for General Industry. In this case, the hazard communication changes remind employers and building owners that have asbestos products in their buildings to provide very detailed training and signage to protect their employees. For example, the Hazard Communication Standard reaffirms the requirement that states:

At the entrance to mechanical rooms/areas in which employees reasonably can be expected to enter and which contain ACM and/or PACM, the building owner shall post signs which identify the material which is present, its location, and appropriate work practices which, if followed, will ensure that ACM and/or PACM will not be disturbed.

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Many employers are far from compliance with the specifics in this part of the Asbestos Standard. If they have any signs at all, typically they are general warnings indicating that asbestos is present, but they likely do not identify the specific materials and approved/or prohibited work practices. This is even more of an issue for employers that have a multilingual workforce. Additional signage or training may be necessary in such cases to make sure that all building occupants, as well as visitors and contractors such as janitorial crews, comprehend the dangers posed by asbestos. These responsibilities are confirmed by the very plain language in the general industry version of the Asbestos Standard.

The employer shall ensure, to the extent feasible, that employees who come in contact with these signs can comprehend them. Means to ensure employee comprehension may include the use of foreign languages, pictographs, graphics, and awareness training.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Mold Remediation Technician

September 11-13: Kalamazoo, MI

Mold Remediation Supervisor

September 18-19: Kalamazoo, MI

RR&P Renovator (RRP Lead)

September 6: Kalamazoo, MI

For complete schedule see:

[WonderMakers.com/Education/2012Training schedule](http://WonderMakers.com/Education/2012Training%20schedule)

Continuing Education Credits

You can earn continuing education credits by attending the MRT classes.

RIA: 3 credits, Clean Trust: 1 credit, NADCA: 4 credits, ACAC: 24 credits

Wonder Makers is accredited to teach in the state-specific programs in the states of Florida, Virginia, Louisiana and more.

With a big push toward ramping up enforcement for the new global version of the Hazard Communication Standard, federal and state OSHA inspectors will be checking to see that all chemical risks are being addressed, including asbestos. In addition to signs, they will be checking if asbestos products are properly labeled as the current regulations note:

When a building owner or employer identifies previously installed ACM and/or PACM, labels or signs shall be affixed or posted so that employees will be notified of what materials contain ACM and/or PACM.

If you've not yet completed an asbestos inspection of your buildings, or need help determining whether additional labels or signs need to be installed, contact us at Wonder Makers and we can help you get your Asbestos Management Program in shape before a government official walks through your door.

Did You Know?

Wonder Makers is trying to identify physicians who are knowledgeable about mold and environmental health concerns. We receive many calls from people looking for medical help, so we are trying to assemble a list of doctors across the country. If you know of a physician who successfully assists patients with these types of problems, please forward their contact information to Susan Pinto at ssp@wondermakers.com. Thank you.

Contact WM to set up a customized seminar for your clients regarding the latest regulation updates and their impact on business owners.

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