



CHEMICAL HAZARDS **2**

Things to Do Before Training

- Identify a chemical product used at the job site that has health or safety hazards you want to be sure everyone knows about.
- Find the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for the product you plan to discuss today (or a package label). Read it and, if possible, make copies for the crew.
- Realize that in doing a training that involves reading a MSDS, there may be some workers who have difficulty reading. Think about how to pair up workers to help each other.
- In the index of the **Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry**, look up **Hazard Communication Program** and **Hazardous Substances** and read the pages listed.

Introduction

Workers must be trained about the hazardous substances at the work site. This is part of our Hazard Communication Program. One of the tools for communicating about hazards is **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)**.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Today we are going to talk about _____ (*name chemical or product*). What are the hazards of working with this chemical?
- Buddy up with someone and take a look at the Material Safety Data Sheet for this product. What are the main sections and types of information on the MSDS?
- What does the MSDS say about the hazards of working with this product?
- Do you know of anyone who has experienced any of these problems?
- What does the MSDS say workers should do to protect themselves?
- What should be done in case of emergencies or spills?

SAFETY  BREAK

ACTIONS TO TAKE

- If there is any protective gear that is needed, make sure the workers have it available.
- Remind the crew how they can see the company's MSDSs for other products they may have questions about.

Key Points to Keep in Mind

Key information on a Material Safety Data Sheet:

- Names of hazardous chemicals in the product
- Physical and chemical characteristics (what it looks and smells like)
- Fire and explosion hazards
- Conditions to avoid because they cause hazardous reactions
- Health hazard information
- Precautions for safe handling and use (what to do for spills, handling, storage)
- Control measures (respirators, ventilation, other protective gear)

General ways to work safely with chemicals:

- Know what to do in an emergency such as a leak or spill.
- Use appropriate protective equipment (safety glasses, gloves, etc.).
- If your clothing becomes contaminated by the chemical, change clothing before going home.
- Always wash hands thoroughly before eating or smoking.
- Never eat, drink, or smoke in the work area where chemicals are used or stored.
- Don't work with chemicals in a confined space without taking special precautions.