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GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM (GHS) IN CHEMICAL SAFETY PROGRAM IN THE WORKPLACE

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Pursuant to the provisions of Articles 162 and 165, Book IV, Titles I and II of Labor Code of the Philippines and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (OSH Standards) and the Joint DTI-DENR-DA-DOF-DOH-DILG-DOLE-DOTC Administrative Order No. 01, Series of 2009, otherwise known as the Adoption and Implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, the following Guidelines is hereby promulgated for the compliance and guidance of all concerned in the workplace.

SECTION 1. Coverage. – This Guidelines shall apply to all workplaces engaged in the manufacture, use, storage of industrial chemicals, in the private sector, including their supply chain.

SECTION 2. Objectives. – The Guidelines aims to protect workers and properties from the hazards of chemicals and to prevent or reduce the incidence of chemically induced accidents, illnesses and injuries and death resulting in the use of chemicals at work.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.

- a. *Chemical substance* – refers to any organic or inorganic substance of a particular molecular identity including any element or uncombined chemical and any combination of such substances, or any mixture of two and excluding radioactive materials.
- b. *Chemical Mixture* – means any combination of two or more chemical substances if the combination does not occur in nature and is not, in whole or in part, the result of a chemical reaction, if none of the chemical substances comprising the combination is a new chemical substance and if the combination could have been manufactured for commercial purposes without a chemical reaction at the time the chemical substances comprising the combination were combined. This shall include non-biodegradable mixtures.
- c. *Container* – refers to any bottle, box, drums, cylinder, bag, barrel, vessel, tank, among others that contains hazardous chemical substances.

- d. *Criteria* – means the technical definition for the physical, health and environmental hazards.
- e. *Establishment* - refers to any single proprietorship, partnership, corporation or similar entity operating an economic activity and engaging the services of workers.
- f. *Exposure* - refers to the amount of chemical that is available for absorption into the body through possible routes of entry into the body i.e. inhalation, ingestion and skin absorption.
- g. *GHS* - an acronym for Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals. The GHS is a system for standardizing and harmonizing the classification and labeling of chemicals. It is a logical and comprehensive approach in
- Defining health, physical and environmental hazards of chemicals
 - Creating classification processes that use available data on chemicals for comparison with the defined hazard criteria; and
 - Communicating hazard information, as well as protective measures, on labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- h. *Hazardous materials or substances* – refer to materials or substances in solid, liquid or gaseous forms known to constitute toxic, flammable, explosive, corrosive, oxidizing and radioactive properties.
- i. *Harmonization* – refers to establishing a common and coherent basis for hazards classification and communication of chemicals, and the appropriate elements relevant to means of transport, consumers, workers and environmental protection can be selected.
- j. *Hazards* – refer to the inherent characteristics of chemical substances and mixtures that exist in the workplace and in the environment, regardless of quantity, that are potentially dangerous or which have the capacity to harm, i.e., its capacity to interfere with normal biological processes, and its capacity to burn, explode, corrode, etc.
- k. *Hazard Category* – means the division of criteria within each hazard class e.g. oral acute toxicity includes five hazard categories and flammable liquids includes four hazard categories. These categories compare hazard severity within a hazard class and should not be taken as a comparison of hazard categories in general.
- l. *Hazard class* – means the nature of the physical, health or environmental hazard, e.g. flammable solid, carcinogen or oral acute toxicity.
- m. *Hazard Statement* – means a statement assigned to a hazard class and category that describes the nature of the hazards of a hazardous product, including, where appropriate, the degree of hazard.
- n. *Industrial chemicals* – mean chemicals in any of the following conditions:

- i. Chemical manipulations are carried out even in small scale;
 - ii. Multiple chemical procedures and/or chemicals are used in the manufacturing or production process;
 - iii. The storage process and handling are also included, or
 - iv. Chemical wastes collection and disposal.
- o. *Label* refers to an appropriate group of written, printed or graphic information elements that are affixed to, printed on, or attached to the immediate container of a hazardous product, or to the outside packaging of a hazardous product.
- p. *Manufacture* - refers to mechanical or chemical transformation of substances into new products whether work is performed by power-driven machines or by hand, whether it is done in a factory or in the worker's home, and whether the products are sold at wholesale or retail.
- q. *Mixtures* – refer to a combination of two or more chemical substances with no chemical reaction taking place.
- r. *Precautionary statement* – means a phrase (and/or pictogram) that describes recommended measures that should be taken to minimize or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous product, or improper storage or handling of a hazardous product.
- s. *Risk* – is the potential (likelihood) that injury (biological damage) will occur in a given situation that is, the interaction of hazard (nature/incident) and the vulnerability (man/society)
- t. *Safety Data Sheet (SDS)* or *Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)* – is a document that must accompany all chemicals and is supplied by the distributor which provides important physical characteristics, ecological, health, safety and toxicological information on chemical substances or mixture ingredients used at the workplace, transported, and utilized by consumer. Refer to Section 5-C.
- u. *Toxic or hazardous substances* – refer to the chemical substances or mixtures that may be harmful to the environment and/or to human health in a short-term and long-term basis if it is inhaled, swallowed, or absorbed through the skin.

SECTION 4. Roles and Responsibilities of Employers, Employees and Safety and Health Committee

A. The employer shall:

1. Ensure the development, implementation and monitoring of the workplace policy and program on safety in the use of chemicals which shall be disseminated to all concerned;
2. Ensure that all chemicals are properly labeled or marked, and that accurate Safety Data Sheets are provided in accordance with the provisions of GHS;

3. Provide the necessary control measures including personal protective equipment. Refer to Section 6-B;
4. Ensure that workers are provided with the appropriate information, education and training on the safe use of chemicals and GHS;
5. Establish and implement chemical emergency response plan to mitigate accidents like accidental exposure, inadvertent release, and fire or explosion. The plan shall include, where appropriate, the provision of personal protective equipment, fire-fighting equipment, fire alarms, release containment measures and evacuation of the workplace and the locality; and
6. Ensure that the Safety Officer is in charge of the overall responsibility for chemical safety in the establishment he/she is working in. This includes specific responsibility to perform regular inspection of the premises (labeling, storing, handling and disposal of chemicals), and provide training advice regarding chemical safety rules and procedures.

B. The employees shall:

1. Comply with the policy and programs on safe use of chemicals;
2. Take all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimize risk to themselves and to others from the use of chemicals at work;
3. Observe proper use of all safeguards and safety devices; and
4. Report immediately to their supervisor any situation which they believe could be a potential risk.

C. Safety and Health Committee. – The duties and responsibilities of the Safety and Health Committee as defined in *Rule 1043 of the DOLE-OSHS* are hereby adopted as follows:

1. Plan and develop accident prevention programs for the establishment;
2. Direct the accident efforts of the establishment in accordance with the safety programs, safety performance and government regulations in order to prevent accidents from occurring in the workplace;
3. Conduct safety meetings at least once a month;
4. Review reports of inspection, accident investigations and implementation of program;
5. Submit reports to the manager on its meetings and activities;
6. Provide necessary assistance to the government inspecting authorities in the proper conduct of their activities such as the enforcement of the provisions of OSHS;
7. Initiate and supervise safety training for employees; and
8. Develop and maintain a disaster contingency plan and organizes such emergency service units as may be necessary to handle disaster situations pursuant to the emergency preparedness manual for establishment of the Office of Civil Defense.

SECTION 5. Adherence to Provisions of the Latest Edition of the GHS. – The establishment shall always adopt the latest provisions of GHS.