

## 6. Examine Chemical Hazard Fact Sheets

Chemical hazard fact sheets disclose acute and chronic health effects and safety hazards of hazardous substances. While these fact sheets are an important source of information, remember that there are many gaps in what is known about the effects of chemicals on workers. Most chemicals have not been adequately tested to determine all their health effects.

The two most common types of fact sheets are *Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)* and *Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets (HSFSs)*. There are also other types ranging from very simple to very detailed. See the websites below for where to find them.



### MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS (MSDS)

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) will give some information on the health hazards of the product. MSDSs are written by chemical manufacturers and should contain a list of hazardous ingredients and may contain the percent of each ingredient in the product. Ingredients may be missing if they are considered a trade secret. Unfortunately, MSDSs often provide poor quality and incomplete information on the long-term health effects of exposure.

#### WHAT INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN A MSDS?

- Identity/Trade Name
- Manufacturer
- Hazardous Ingredients
- Physical/Chemical Characteristics
- Fire and Explosion Hazard Data
- Reactivity Data
- Health Hazard Data
- Precautions for Safe Handling and Use
- Control Measures

## HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE FACT SHEETS (HSFS)

To obtain more complete health and safety information on *specific chemicals*, review New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) *Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets (HSFSs)*. They have a user-friendly format and are available in English for more than 1,700 chemicals and in Spanish for more than 600 chemicals. These fact sheets are available free online, from each county's Right to Know County Lead Agency, or from a public employee's employer. They are also available from the NJDHSS Right to Know Program.

**Phone:** 609-984-2202

<http://web.doh.state.nj.us/rtkhsfs/indexfs.aspx>

### WHAT INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN HSFS?

- Description, Reason for Citation, First Aid, Hazard Summary, Workplace Exposure Limits
- Determining Your Exposure, Health Hazard Information, Medical Testing
- Workplace Controls and Practices, Personal Protective Equipment, Fire Hazards
- Spills and Emergencies, Handling and Storage, Right to Know Information Resources
- Definitions
- Information for Emergency Responders

## AN IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MSDS AND A HSFS

Note that an MSDS gives health and safety information for a product that is often a mixture of several individual chemicals. HSFSs give health and safety information for individual chemicals. Several HSFSs will be needed for any mixture or product, one for each ingredient.

## PUBLICATIONS WITH MORE INFORMATION



*Description of a Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet*

**Phone:** 609-984-2202, NJDHSS Right to Know Program

[www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkbro.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkbro.pdf)

This publication is also available in Spanish.

[www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkbros.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/rtkweb/rtkbros.pdf)

## WEBSITES WITH MORE INFORMATION



OSHA Material Safety Data Sheets  
[www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/msdsformat.html](http://www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/msdsformat.html)

NIOSH Chemical Resources Home Page  
[www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/chemical-safety/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/chemical-safety/)

## OTHER CHEMICAL HAZARD FACT SHEETS

NIOSH Chemical Cards	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ipcs/icstart.html">www.cdc.gov/niosh/ipcs/icstart.html</a>
Chemical Profiles	<a href="http://www.scorecard.org/chemical-profiles/">www.scorecard.org/chemical-profiles/</a>
Toxicological Profiles	<a href="http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxpro2.html">www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxpro2.html</a>
Finding MSDSs on the Web	<a href="http://www.ilpi.com/msds/index.html">www.ilpi.com/msds/index.html</a>
Vermont SIRI MSDS Collection	<a href="http://siri.uvm.edu/msds">http://siri.uvm.edu/msds</a>

