

# Top 3 Challenges of Managing Safety Data Sheets (SDS) And How to Overcome Them



Hazard communication routinely makes OSHA's list of top 10 violations. An analysis of those violations shows that many are related to safety data sheets (SDSs). OSHA has specific expectations and requirements when it comes to SDSs, which means it's important to review your own program to make sure you're overcoming these top three challenges of maintaining SDSs.

## 1 Maintaining SDSs for Every Hazardous Chemical in the Workplace

You must maintain an SDS for each hazardous chemical in your workplace. To determine whether you have an SDS for each hazardous chemical, it's necessary (and required by OSHA) that you compile a list of all hazardous chemicals you have on site. This list can then be checked against the SDSs you have. If any SDSs are missing, contact your supplier and request one. As new or revised SDSs are received, update your files.



## 2 Making SDSs Readily Accessible

SDSs must be readily accessible to employees during each work shift when they are in their work area. This accessibility may be accomplished in different ways. Some employers keep SDSs in a binder in a central location (e.g., in a pick-up truck on a construction site). Others, particularly in workplaces with large numbers of chemicals, provide access electronically. However, if access to SDSs is provided electronically, there must be an adequate backup system in place in the event of a power outage, equipment failure or other emergency involving the primary electronic system.

No matter what system is used, you must ensure that employees and medical personnel can immediately obtain the required information in an emergency.



# Top 3 Challenges of Managing Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

## And How to Overcome Them *(continued)*



### 3 Ensuring SDSs Are Specific to the Product and Manufacturer

SDSs must be specific to the product and manufacturer. If you're using the same chemical (i.e., acetone) from different manufacturers, you must maintain the SDS you received for each one.

By successfully managing these challenges, you can stay in compliance with OSHA's SDS requirements and better protect employees from accidents and injuries.

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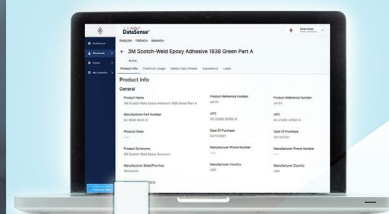
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