



GHS FAQs

Q. What is GHS?

A. GHS stands for Globally Harmonised System (GHS) of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. The system is used to classify and communicate chemical hazards using internationally consistent terms and information on chemical labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

Q. What chemicals are affected?

A. Any items that are classified as a chemical hazard and are used in a workplace environment.

Q. What components are affected?

A. Product labels and SDS'.

Q. Are all states affected?

A. Western Australia and Victoria are excluded from GHS labelling requirements. However, if you wish to distribute your products in the others states your product must then be GHS compliant. WA and Victoria are currently reviewing legislation with the intent to harmonise soon.

Q. What date does GHS take affect?

A. From 1 January 2017, all affected chemicals manufactured or imported must be GHS-compliant.

Q. As an end user of hazardous chemicals, do I need to re-label or dispose of chemicals that are not GHS labelled?

A. No. End users of hazardous chemicals are not required to re-label or dispose of their existing hazardous chemicals. End users should talk to chemical suppliers to ensure GHS labelled stock is received from 1 January 2017.

Q. Are Dangerous Goods signs and transport placards affected?

A. No. You must continue to comply with the ADG Code and relevant state and territory transport laws for the transport of dangerous goods by road and rail. However the hazardous chemical product itself must comply to GHS labelling standards.

Q. Does the GHS replace the Australian Dangerous Goods (ADG) Code?

A. No. You must continue to comply with the ADG Code and relevant state and territory transport laws for the transport of dangerous goods by road and rail. When used in the workplace however, dangerous goods must meet the labelling requirements prescribed under the GHS Regulations.

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Q. What products are excluded from GHS?

A. DUAL USE PRODUCTS

Some hazardous chemicals may be intended for supply to both the consumer household markets and workplaces in identical containers and packaging. These products are sometimes referred to as dual use products. A dual use product label only needs to comply with the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons (SUSMP) labelling requirements. If the manufacturer or importer determines that the use, handling and storage of the product are predominantly related to a work activity, the label must meet GHS requirements.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Food and beverage products that are packaged in a form intended for consumption do not require labelling under the GHS Regulations. However, large or bulk quantities must be labelled to meet workplace requirements. For example, a 1 kilolitre container of flammable alcoholic spirits must be labelled to meet GHS requirements, while a 750mL bottle of the same spirits does not.

THERAPEUTIC GOODS

Therapeutic goods are regarded as correctly labelled under the WHS Regulations when labelled in accordance with Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) requirements and in a form:

- intended for intake or administration to or by a patient or consumer, or
- intended for use for therapeutic purposes

When not in a form intended for intake or administration to or by a patient or consumer, or for therapeutic purposes, workplace labelling must be used. For example, a pharmacist repacks a 1kg container of formulated tablets in smaller containers for dispensing to patients. The 1kg container must comply with TGA labelling requirements. However, a 1kg container of the same material in powdered form used by a pharmacist in manufacturing or formulating products must be labelled according to GHS labelling requirements.

Q. What happens if I manufacture or import non-compliant product after 1 January 2017?

- A. Your customers may refuse to purchase non-compliant product from you. Both individuals and businesses may be at risk of fines for non-compliance.

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