Title 8, California Code of Regulations, Section 5194 (Hazard Communication) [http://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/5194.html] requires employers to inform and train employees on the hazardous substances to which they may be exposed at their workplace. To comply with this requirement, County departments should acquire and maintain copies of material safety data sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous substance in their respective workplace(s) and should ensure that the MSDSs are readily accessible to employees during each work shift. MSDSs may be maintained in paper or electronic form, but must be organized such that individual data sheets can be located when needed. If employees must travel between workplaces during a work shift, the MSDSs may be kept at the primary workplace, but should be readily available in an emergency.

MSDSs are reference guides that provide information on hazardous substances including, but not limited to, health hazards, chemical and physical characteristics, first aid and safe handling procedures of the substance. MSDSs must be in English and should contain the following information:

(A) The identity used on the label, chemical and common name(s) and Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) number(s) of the hazardous substance.

(B) Physical and chemical properties of the hazardous substance (such as vapor pressure and flash point).

(C) The physical hazards of the hazardous substance, including the potential for fire, explosion, and reactivity.

(D) The health hazards of the hazardous substance, including signs and symptoms of exposure, and any medical conditions which are generally recognized as being aggravated by exposure to the substance.

(E) The potential route(s) of entry.

(F) The Cal/OSHA permissible exposure limit (PEL), ACGIH Threshold Limit Value (TLV), and any other exposure limit used or recommended by the manufacturer, importer, or employer preparing the MSDS, where available.

(G) Whether the hazardous substance is listed in the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Sixth Annual Report on Carcinogens or has been found to be a potential carcinogen in the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Monographs, Volumes 1-53 and Supplements 1-8, or by OSHA.
(H) Any generally applicable precautions for safe handling and use which are known to the manufacturer, importer, or employer preparing the MSDS, including the appropriate hygienic practices, protective measures during repair and maintenance of contaminated equipment, and procedures for cleanup of spills and leaks.

(I) Any generally applicable control measures which are known to the manufacturer, importer or employer preparing the MSDS, such as appropriate engineering controls, work practices, or personal protective equipment (PPE).

(J) Emergency and first-aid procedures.

(K) The date of preparation or revision of the MSDS.

(L) The name, address and telephone number of the manufacturer, importer, employer, or other responsible party preparing or distributing the MSDS, who can provide additional information on the hazardous substance and appropriate emergency procedures, if necessary.

(M) A description in lay terms, if not otherwise provided, on either a separate sheet or with the body of the information specified in this section, of the specific potential health risks posed by the hazardous substance intended to alert any person reading the information.
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SAMPLE MSDS (page 2)