

The Globally Harmonized Systems (GHS) Nine New Pictograms

WHAT'S AT STAKE

GHS stands for the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. GHS defines and classifies the hazards of chemical products, and communicates health and safety information on labels and safety data sheets. The goal is that the same set of rules for classifying hazards, and the same format and content for labels and safety data sheets (SDS) will be adopted and used around the world. An international team of hazard communication experts developed GHS. Canada is expected to implement GHS, and will soon announce a timeline. But if you work around hazardous materials, you will begin to see the new GHS pictograms in your workplace very soon as the US and others implement the new GHS standards. It's important that you are able to recognize the new pictograms and understand their meaning

WHAT'S THE DANGER

The new GHS labels are designed to simplify existing labels by placing the emphasis on imagery rather than text as well as color coding to reduce problems with language barriers and to make hazards quickly recognizable. You need to know that the Hazard Statement(s) on a GHS Label has a specific meaning that corresponds with the new pictograms.

The new GHS labels have several features that will make them easier for workers to recognize:

- The pictograms feature a black symbol, with each one encompassing a set of hazards.
- Each symbol has a white background.
- Each symbol has a red frame

EXAMPLE

A crew is working onsite with a chemical used to dissolve a substance from their working surface. The chemical is highly corrosive and will cause chemical burns to skin on contact. A new employee is charged with applying the chemical to the surface and, while he has multiple years of experience using a similar chemical, he has not used this particular chemical before. In addition, while he has conversational English skills, he is unable to read or write in English. With the use of the GHS pictograms, the employee can easily glance at the chemical's container and determine the hazard. With this knowledge, he is able to properly outfit himself with the correct PPE to avoid the hazard.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Before you start seeing the new pictograms in your workplace, you need to familiarize yourself with what each hazard statement phrase and image means, and how it impacts your safety. For example, the pictogram of a flame indicates the following hazard statements: Flammables, Emits Flammable Gas, Self Reactive, Pyrophorics, Organics Peroxides, and Self-Healing.

The chart listing all **NINE** of the new pictograms and their associated hazard are on the following page.

FINAL WORD

The GHS symbols have been incorporated into pictograms for use on GHS labels. Use the new GHS labels or be left behind.

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<p>Health Hazard</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carcinogen ■ Mutagenicity ■ Reproductive Toxicity ■ Respiratory Sensitizer ■ Target Organ Toxicity ■ Aspiration Toxicity 	<p>Flame</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Flammables ■ Pyrophorics ■ Self-Heating ■ Emits Flammable Gas ■ Self-Reactives ■ Organic Peroxides 	<p>Exclamation Mark</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Irritant (skin and eye) ■ Skin Sensitizer ■ Acute Toxicity ■ Narcotic Effects ■ Respiratory Tract Irritant ■ Hazardous to Ozone Layer (Non-Mandatory)
<p>Gas Cylinder</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gases Under Pressure 	<p>Corrosion</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skin Corrosion/Burns ■ Eye Damage ■ Corrosive to Metals 	<p>Exploding Bomb</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explosives ■ Self-Reactives ■ Organic Peroxides
<p>Flame Over Circle</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Oxidizers 	<p>Environment (Non-Mandatory)</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Aquatic Toxicity 	<p>Skull & Crossbones</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)

