

YOU AND

Hazardous Substances



- how to recognise hazardous substances
and use them safely

WHAT IS A HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE?

A substance is hazardous if it has one or more of the following properties...

Explosive

- Don't handle unless properly qualified
- Keep away from open flames & sparks



Flammable

- Keep away from open flames & sparks
- Keep away from oxidisers
- Only open when in good ventilation



Oxidiser and organic peroxide

- Keep container closed
- Keep away from flammables



Corrosive

- Wear gloves and/or protective clothing



Toxic

- Keep in labelled container
- Wear protective clothing



Ecotoxic

- Use proper equipment
- Don't pour down the drain
- Keep in labelled container



Explosive



Flammable



Oxidising



Ecotoxic



Toxic



Corrosive

THE BIG DO'S & DON'TS

Do:

Keep substances in their proper container

Read the label

Make sure that labels do not get damaged

Read any additional information supplied with the substance or package

Keep all the information

Clean up spills quickly, provided this can be done in a way that protects you and the environment

Don't:

Store in a way that damages the packaging

Store or use where unauthorised people – particularly children – can gain access to them

Deposit in landfill or down drain without first checking that it is allowed

Detonate or burn substances other than fuels unless qualified to do so



DAILY NEWS

INTRODUCTION

We use hazardous substances every day and in all sorts of ways. Some are so commonplace that we don't even realise that they're dangerous—but they are.

So, we need to be sure about what's hazardous, what's not and how to handle and dispose of the dangerous ones. But do you know how to do that?

That's where the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO) comes in.

The HSNO Act pulls together the management of hazardous substances into one law that focuses on all of their hazards – to you and to the environment. It makes sure you have enough information to use and dispose of them safely.

HOW DO I KNOW IF A SUBSTANCE IS HAZARDOUS?

Sale to public

Information provided by the manufacturer, supplier or retailer (typically, this would be as a label on the package or container) should tell you:

- if a substance is hazardous
- its hazardous properties
- how to dispose of it or where to find that out
- contact details for the manufacturer or supplier.

There may be additional information – for instance, in the package or attached in a plastic sleeve – depending on its type and degree of hazard.

Supply to a workplace

A hazardous substance supplied to a workplace must be accompanied by more detailed documentation on:

- the type and degree of hazard
- kinds and extent of harm or damage it can cause
- when that harm or damage is likely to happen and how to prevent it happening
- how to dispose of it and how not to dispose of it.

Transport

When a substance is packaged for transport, the package must have a placard or label indicating its type and degree of hazard and the driver must carry documentation identifying the substance and the hazards it presents.



WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES?

- You must make sure that you have been supplied with the right information and documentation for the hazardous substances that you deal with.
- Each hazardous substance must be supplied in packages that comply with packaging controls. You must make sure that this packaging is not damaged. Information supplied with the hazardous substance must be kept with the substance and must remain in good condition.
- You need to comply with the controls set by the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) on each substance that you deal with. Check to see if a code of practice has been approved by the Authority. Following that could make compliance with these controls easier.
- If you are dealing with restricted hazardous substances (such as almost all explosives and many highly toxic substances), you may need to become an approved handler or ensure that certified approved handlers deal with these substances.
- In some cases, your site may need to be certified as suitable for some hazardous substances.
- For certain substances you will need to be prepared for an emergency (for example, have the right sort of fire extinguisher available where there are flammable substances and have an emergency management plan).



HOW CAN I DISPOSE OF SOMETHING SAFELY?

All hazardous substances should have disposal instructions on their labels or in the accompanying information. Generally, disposal should be by treatment by a hazardous waste management operator or disposal to suitable landfills in accordance with their acceptance criteria, or, in certain cases only, to sewer, in accordance with your local authority's trade waste acceptance criteria.

HOW ARE THE CONTROLS ON HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES MONITORED AND ENFORCED?

The HSNO Act is enforced by a number of central and local government agencies, such as hazardous substances staff employed by councils and Occupational Safety and Health staff at the Department of Labour. Enforcement agencies will monitor compliance with the HSNO Act and regulations and the conditions set by ERMA. They can issue compliance orders and infringement notices and prosecute offenders when an order is not complied with. Enforcement agencies can also advise you on how to comply with the HSNO Act and regulations.





WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

The manufacturer, supplier or importer should provide you with a contact number for more information. The enforcement agencies, particularly the hazardous substances experts in local authorities and the Occupational Safety and Health Service of the Department of Labour, as well as ERMA New Zealand (Environmental Risk Management Authority), are able to give you advice on dealing with hazardous substances. They can also help you determine if you need an emergency plan and give you advice on how to prepare one.

Disclaimer:

The information in this brochure has been prepared for general educational purposes only. It should not be regarded as official policy of any of the government agencies listed, or relied on as a legal interpretation of the HSNO Act. For detailed information, please seek formal advice from ERMA New Zealand or your legal advisor.

ERMA New Zealand is an independent body established under the HSNO Act. Its role is to assess the environmental and health risks and to place controls to make sure that these are managed properly. It maintains a public register of all approved hazardous substances – including the controls on each substance – and produces guides and other resources for dealing with hazardous substances.

Environmental Risk Management Authority

PO Box 131, Wellington, New Zealand

Phone +64 4 473 8426 Fax +64 4 473 8433

www.ermanz.govt.nz

The Ministry for the Environment has more information about the HSNO Act, regulations, policy and administration, including a user-friendly guide to the HSNO Act.

Ministry for the Environment

PO Box 10 362, Wellington, New Zealand

Phone +64 4 917 7400 Fax +64 4 917 7523

www.mfe.govt.nz

Or check out

www.hsno.govt.nz



ERMA New Zealand, BP House, 20 Customhouse Quay, PO Box 131, Wellington, New Zealand,
Tel +64 4 473 8426; Fax +64 4 473 8433

Ministry for the Environment, Grand Annexe, 84 Boulcott Street, PO Box 10-362, Wellington,
New Zealand, Tel +64 4 917 7400; Fax +64 4 917 7523