

## Catawba County Emergency Medical Services

### Hazardous Communications Program

#### Policy

It is the policy of Catawba County Emergency Medical Services to comply with both the Federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, 29-CFR-1910.1200 and the North Carolina OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, 13 Nac 7c.0101 (a) (99), or the Worker or Employee Right-to-Know laws.

#### Purpose

The purpose is to insure that all Emergency Medical Services employees and volunteers who may be exposed to chemicals and/or health hazards are effectively informed on these hazards primarily through the following methods:

- A written hazard communication program.
- Material Safety Data Sheets.
- Container labeling and other forms of warning.
- Employee education and training.

The written program and all relative data is available upon request to employees, volunteers and their designated representatives, if any, also to the North Carolina Commissioner of Labor.

Personnel effected applies to all Emergency Medical Services employees, volunteers, students and observers who, while performing their jobs, are exposed to materials which may cause chronic or acute physical or health hazards.

#### Application

- Listing of Hazardous Substances
  - Not all chemicals used by Emergency Medical Services are hazardous.
  - CCEMS does maintain a list of those which the standards refer to as “hazardous.”
  - A determination of the hazardousness of some chemicals used by CCEMS employees or volunteers does not necessarily mean an immediate and present danger to the safety and health of these employees or volunteers.
  - It does mean that these chemicals have certain hazardous properties which the employees or volunteers should be informed about and which require adequate caution in their handling and possible utilization of special protective measures.
    - ❖ Each designated Emergency Medical Services representative will survey their employees’ or volunteers’ work area and review the materials used in their department.

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- ❖ Each designated Emergency Medical Services site representative will keep a list of all known products used by employees which qualify as hazardous materials. This includes any chemical capable of producing acute or chronic health effects in personnel who may be exposed to a hazardous material.
  - Source documents for this list are The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists - Threshold Limit Values and North Carolina OSHA Standards for General Industry. Please contact the County Risk Manager if you need a copy of the above listings.
  - This list shall be reviewed and updated as new chemicals are added or removed. A copy will be forwarded to the County Risk Manager annually.
  - Each new chemical brought into the workplace must have a Material Safety Data Sheet, container labeling and employee training.
- ❖ A master list of all known products that qualify as hazardous chemicals used at EMS sites will be kept on file with the EMS Safety Officer. These records will be kept on file for at least thirty years in accordance with 29CFR 1910.20
- ❖ Exempted items include the following:
  - Any food, food additive, color additive, drug, or cosmetic that is covered in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.
  - Any consumer product brought into the workplace to be used for personal consumption.
- Material Safety Data Sheets
  - It is the responsibility of the Safety Officer to ensure that a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is on file for each hazardous material at all EMS sites. There should be a MSDS for each item listed on the Hazardous Materials list.
    - ❖ New MSDS's: must be received at the time a new chemical is received into the workplace on the first shipment. The Safety Officer must send a copy of each new MSDS to the Risk Management Team Chair.
    - ❖ Acquiring MSDS's: The respective purchasing agent for each site should not accept any hazardous chemical unless a MSDS for the chemical has been received.
    - ❖ Control of MSDS's: The original MSDS must be kept at the site where the chemical is used. If a company issues a new MSDS, the Safety Officer should keep a copy of the older version in file and use the newer version for employee training. A copy of the new MSDS must be sent to the Risk Manager Team Chair to update the master chemical list.

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- ❖ Availability of MSDS's: MSDS sheets will be readily accessible to all employees at each site upon request.
- Container Labeling
  - It is the responsibility of the Safety Officer to ensure that each container of a hazardous material within the department is labeled, tagged, or marked with the following components:
    - ❖ The identity of the contents.
    - ❖ Hazard warnings appropriate for employee protection.
    - ❖ The name and address of the manufacturer, importer, or other person responsible for the chemical and from whom more information about the chemical can be obtained.
  - If improperly or inadequately labeled hazardous materials are in stock the Safety Officer will contact the Purchasing Agent to secure the proper information.
- Employee Training
  - No employee shall be asked or required to work with a chemical covered by this policy unless they have been trained in the use and hazards of that chemical. Training is conducted on an annual basis.
  - All new hires will be trained prior to starting scheduled shifts and annually thereafter.
  - Each Emergency Services employee and volunteers will receive training from the Safety Officer or his/her designee on the following:
    - ❖ Existence and requirement of the standard as the standard relates to the operations of the site.
    - ❖ Operations which involve hazardous materials.
    - ❖ Location of written material (MSDS's) and other related information.
    - ❖ Hazards of the work area, methods/observations for detecting the presence of these hazards, and protective measures to be taken.
    - ❖ Instructions on the issue of new hazards being introduced into the workplace.
    - ❖ Documentation of training is to be kept at each site and available for review by the Risk Management Team Chair.
  - The County Risk Manager may also offer Hazard Communication standard training to supplement EMS site specific training to include the following:

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- ❖ Organize/provide annual update for EMS employees and volunteers to include reporting, inventory and training.
  - ❖ Maintain necessary OSHA record keeping and provide assistance to Emergency Medical Services.
  - Informing Outside Contractors and Employers
    - Before a contractor commences work, EMS will be responsible for informing the contractor of the following:
      - ❖ Informed of the Hazard Communication Standard.
      - ❖ Location of hazardous chemicals in the workplace and the location of MSDS's.
      - ❖ Obligation of the contractor to inform its employees of the above requirements.
      - ❖ Signed acknowledgement.
    - Emergency Medical Services will also ensure that the contractors have provided this agency with the following information:
      - ❖ Hazardous chemicals to which our employees and volunteers may be exposed to while the contractor is on the job.
      - ❖ Precautions our employees and volunteers may take to lessen the possibility of exposure by usage of appropriate protective equipment.
  - Non-routine Tasks
    - Prior to the performance of non-routine tasks, such as spill cleanup, unusual repairs, unlabeled pipes, which might involve potential exposure to hazardous chemicals, the employees and volunteers involved, will receive specific hazard training.
- See also Contractor Acknowledgement