

Do warning labels and safety
data sheets fulfil their
purpose?

NO!

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Federation

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“... the Safety Data Sheet shall enable the employer to determine whether any hazardous chemical agents are present in the workplace, and to assess any risk to the health and safety of workers arising from their use.

The information in the Safety Data Sheet shall be written in a clear and concise manner. The Safety Data Sheet shall be prepared by a competent person who shall take into account the specific needs of the user audience, as far as it is known.”

(REACH Regulation, Annex II, Guide to the compilation of safety data sheets)

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5 questions about SDSs

What kind of competence is required to make a good SDS?

Can a consultant create a good SDS just knowing the product's formulation?

Can computerised SDS-systems replace human skills?

Why are SDS:s often created by "Regulatory Affairs" department and not "Customer Support"?

What about the readers of the SDS?

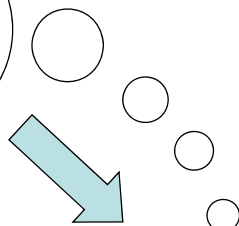
Do they also need a certain competence?



The impossible situation of SDS:s



Purchaser
(Authority)



Addressee
(Customer)



Executor
(Supplier)



Example of instructive text from a SDS, Chapter 8

Exposure Controls : The level of protection and types of controls necessary will vary depending upon potential exposure conditions. Select controls based on a risk assessment of local circumstances. Appropriate measures include: Adequate explosion-proof ventilation to control airborne concentrations below the exposure guidelines/limits. Eye washes and showers for emergency use.

Who needs this information?

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Uncertainty and interpretations in risk communication. A study focusing on Safety Data Sheets.

Report in the AGREE-project. Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), and The Environmental Protection Agency (NV), Stockholm, June 2004.

Britt-Marie Drottz Sjöberg and Lena Drottz

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The study involved actual users of SDSs

- Rescue personnel
- Safety personnel
- Chemical industry

People from chemical industry were most familiar with SDSs and also gave most Yes replies to if one get all relevant information in a SDS

but also most Yes if they have ever lacked any information in a SDS

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Conclusions

Safety data sheets provide a useful base for information but more detailed information is needed, especially about protective measures and equipment.

The information should be presented in a more user friendly manner.

The intended meaning of expressions and technical concepts must be explicitly explained in the texts.

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What's happening now?

Any downstream user shall identify, apply and where suitable, recommend, appropriate measures to adequately control risks identified in the safety data sheet(s) supplied to him

REACH Regulation, Article 37(5)

If not, the downstream user has to make his own chemical safety assessment.

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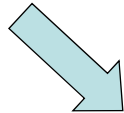
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The future situation of SDS:s



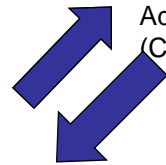
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Thank you for listening!

Any questions?