

# Material Safety Data Sheet Directive

## Objective

The objective of this European directive is to provide manufacturing operations with the information they need regarding the hazard profiles of, and the risks associated with, dangerous substances and preparations in the work place. The goal of the directive is to facilitate the protection of workers' health and safety while at work. A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) compiles hazard and safety-related information for all dangerous substances and preparations, including maximum permissible concentrations and/or legal limits where applicable. Producers have a legal obligation to provide Material Safety Data Sheets to the professional users of their substances or products (manufacturers, professional cleaning operations and the like).

This directive aims primarily to provide professional users of substances and preparations with sufficient information to take the necessary measures to ensure protection of health and the environment.

## Background

The provision of a Safety Data Sheet (also called a Material Safety Data Sheet or MSDS) is a mandatory requirement for substances and preparations which are classified as "dangerous" according to the Dangerous Substances Directive (67/548/EEC) and the Dangerous Preparations Directive (99/45/EC). An MSDS is also mandatory for preparations which are not classified as dangerous but contain at least one substance at a level of >1% posing a health or environmental hazard, that is, a substance classified as dangerous, or a substance which has workplace exposure limits. The MSDS must be provided to the recipient by the person responsible for placing the substance or preparation on the market (the manufacturer, importer or distributor).

An MSDS is principally intended for use by professional users.

The MSDS provides information on the hazards to health, safety and the environment inherent in a chemical substance or preparation. It also gives guidance on how the substance or preparation should be handled, stored and disposed of as well as what to do in case of an accident. In addition, the MSDS provides important regulatory information.

## Implementation

The European Directive on Safety Data Sheets (2001/58/EC) entered into force on July 30, 2002. The Annex of the Directive provides in-depth guidance on the compilation of an MSDS and aims to ensure consistency and accuracy in the content of each of the mandatory 16 sections under the following headings:

- identification of the substance/preparation and of the company/undertaking
- composition/information on ingredients
- hazard identification
- first-aid measures
- fire-fighting measures

- accidental release measures
- handling and storage
- exposure controls/personal protection
- physical and chemical properties
- stability and reactivity
- toxicological information
- ecological information
- disposal considerations
- transport information
- regulatory information
- other information

## **Enforcement**

The Authorities in the European Member States monitor the availability of Material Safety Data Sheets in the trade.