

Laboratory Safety Labeling and Transfer of Chemicals

Permanent Container Labels

Employers must ensure that no worker uses, stores, or allows any other person to use or store any hazardous substance in a laboratory if the container (including bags, barrels, bottles, boxes, cans, cylinders, drums and reaction vessels) does not meet the following labeling requirements in OSHA's Hazard Communication standard [29 CFR 1910.1200(f)(1)]:

- The identity of the chemical and appropriate hazard warnings must be shown on the label.
- The hazard warning must provide users with an immediate understanding of the primary health and/or physical hazard(s) of the hazardous chemical through the use of words, pictures, symbols, or any combination of these elements.
- The name and address of the manufacturer, importer or other responsible party must be included on the label.
- The hazard label message must be legible, permanently displayed and written in English.

Portable (Secondary) Container Labels

Often, laboratory operations require transferring chemicals from the original labeled container into a secondary container (e.g., beaker, flask, or bottle). Portable containers must comply with the labeling requirements listed above if any of the following events occur:

- The material is not used within the work shift of the individual who makes the transfer.
- The worker who made the transfer leaves the work area.
- The container is moved to another work area and is no longer in the possession of the worker who filled the container.

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The identity of the chemical and appropriate hazard warnings must be shown on the label.

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- Labels on portable containers are not required if the worker who made the transfer uses all of the contents during the work shift.

When a secondary container is used for longer than one shift or does not meet the requirements outlined in the Permanent Container Labels section, above, a label needs to be applied to the secondary container. This label must contain two key pieces of information: the identity of the hazardous chemical(s) in the container (e.g., chemical name) and the hazards present. There are many ways to communicate this hazard information. Employers should select a system that will work for each location.

Replacement Container Label

The existing label on a container entering the workplace from a supplier must not be removed, altered or defaced. If a chemical container's original label must be replaced, the new label must contain the same information as the original. Only use labels, ink and markings that are not soluble in the liquid content of the container.

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