

Workplace Health & Safety

Industry Issue Overview

Continually Evolving Rules for Worker Safety

The health and safety of all workers is of utmost importance. Health Canada, Environmental and Workplace Health, and Occupational Health and Safety are the governing agencies and oversight bodies responsible for the care and safe working environments of all employees in Canada. Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations; Hazardous Products Act; Hazardous Products Regulations; Hazardous Materials Information Review Act, and Hazardous Materials Information Review Regulations play a critical role in protecting employees working in Canada.

CPCA supports the CASE industry in maintaining compliance efforts through open and transparent communication and has several Technical Committees or Strategic Working Groups that collaborate with governing bodies, and regulatory agencies to ensure policies do not create undue regulatory or administrative burden for businesses and/or employees.

What is WHMIS?

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems (WHMIS) is Canada's leading hazard communication tool to support workers who handle chemicals in the workplace. In 2015 WHMIS aligned its system with the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

In the 1990s, the United Nations Economic Commission developed a chemical classification system for the entire world called the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) in the workplace that would:

- Enhance the protection of human health and the environment with a comprehensible system for hazard communication
- Provide a recognized framework for countries without an existing system
- Reduce the need for testing and evaluation of chemicals
- Facilitate international trade in chemicals for hazards properly assessed and identified internationally

In 2015 Canada replaced the existing program for chemicals, the Controlled Products Act and Regulations per Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS 1988) introducing the Hazardous Products Act in WHMIS 2015.

GHS defines and classifies the hazards of chemical products while communicating health and safety information on labels and safety data sheets (SDS) in the same format, covering chemicals in the workplace and transport, in consumer products, pesticides and pharmaceuticals.

Two Major Elements in the GHS

Critical Hazard Communication

GHS labeling requires certain information to appear on the label itself. For example, technical identity may be required, standardized hazard statements, signal words, and symbols, all per the classification of that chemical or mixture.

Precautionary statements may also be required in some countries per information extracted from the Safety Data Sheets, such as classification of the hazards of chemicals according to the GHS rules guiding classifying pure chemicals and mixtures according to specific criteria; communication of hazards and precautionary information using Safety Data Sheets and labels as required for provincial responsibility related to worker training.

GHS in Canada

The Hazardous Products Regulations came into force in Canada in 2015. Both the amended Hazardous Products Act and the new regulations prescribe requirements for labels and SDSs for hazardous products sold, distributed, or imported into Canada. The first amendment introducing the GHS Revised Edition 7 was published on January 4, 2023, in Canada. The amendment adopted new hazard classes, modification of some classification criteria, and new information elements required on safety data sheets. The transition period is over 3 years and impacts all hazardous products per the SDS changes. Health Canada is now assessing and publishing a Hazardous Substances Assessment with a total of 18 now available with the expressed aim to assist raw material suppliers.



CPCA supports the CASE industry in maintaining compliance efforts through open and transparent communication.



CPCA's Regulatory Work on GHS/WHMIS

CPCA is a member of Health Canada's Current Issues Committee (CIC) comprised of representatives from Government, industry, labour, and provincial/territorial Governments, all focused on workplace health and safety. The CIC was disbanded in 2021 and new stakeholder outreach strategies are now used which CPCA and on which CPCA is fully engaged. CPCA continues to compile and publish information received from the Government's WHMIS 2015 Desk. Members can consult CPCA's Canada CoatingsHUB for recent updates.

Health Canada issued a Notice of Intent to address Human Health Hazards of Concern in consumer chemical products, which ended October 20, 2023. Based on industry feedback Health Canada is planning future stakeholder consultations, completing a cost-benefit analysis, and considering novel approaches to accommodate proposed safety information on consumer chemical products. CPCA views such an approach as an over-reach that will only lead to duplication of labelling and persists in actively advocating for the retention of consumer product 'exemption' for products used in the workplace.

36,736

Workplace Injuries Occured Nationwide in 2021

100%

of Workplace Injuries are Preventable

16,342

Injuries in Federal Jurisdictions



Canadian Paint
and Coatings
Association

Association canadienne
de l'industrie de la peinture
et du revêtement

Canadian Paint and Coatings Association
900-170 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa ON K1P 5V5
613-231-3604 | info@canpaint.com

*Trusted Advocacy.
Proven Results.*

The Canadian Paint and Coatings Association (CPCA) was founded in 1913 and since then it has forged a legacy as one of Canada's oldest trade associations advocating for the interests of the paint and coatings industry. CPCA's team of regulatory and chemical experts understand how policy, regulations, and industry are intricately connected, providing proactive approaches on legislative and regulatory development for critical issues for the CASE Industry. For more information on this or other issues of interest contact CPCA.