

Alert: An Update on the Implementation of GHS in Canada



Canada intends to implement an international system for classifying and labelling chemicals called the Globally Harmonized System (GHS), which will impact the current MSDS and label requirements under WHMIS. Health Canada is coordinating Canadian adoption of GHS with help from Environment Canada and TransportCanada.

On Dec. 4, 2012, the UN Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals released information on the status of the implementation of GHS in Canada.

When the federal government announced on Dec. 7, 2011 that Canada and the US were going to align and synchronize implementation of common classification and labelling requirements for workplace hazardous chemicals, Canada committed to implementing GHS by **June 1, 2015**.

To align with the US, which has already taken steps to implement GHS, Canada hopes to table amendments to the *Hazardous Products Act* by **Spring 2013**. These amendments will give Health Canada the authority to implement GHS. It'll also publish draft changes to the *Controlled Products Regulations* for consultation at around the same time. Once approved, these changes would then require changes to the federal, provincial and territorial OHS laws.

Given these steps, Canada is working towards ensuring that changes to the HPA and its regulations, as well as other affected pieces of legislation, are finalized by **Spring 2014** so the jurisdictions have enough time to make amendments to their corresponding OHS laws by June 2015.

For more information on GHS, what it means for your workplace and what you can do now to prepare for its implementation in Canada, go to the OHS Insider's WHMIS Compliance Centre, where you'll find:

- WHMIS: The 'Globally Harmonized System' and What It Means to You
- GHS Is Coming in the US'What Does This Mean for Canadian Companies'
- WHMIS: 8 Things to Do Now to Prepare for the GHS
- Recorded webinar on how GHS will change WHMIS.