HazCom, SDSes, and Chemicals in Public Works (Safety Brief)

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PACIF has developed Safety Briefs to help municipal highway supervisors maintain a high level of safety and hazard awareness among employees. We recommend using these short "tailgate trainings" on a regular basis – and **at least once a month**. If you need a particular safety topic, please contact us at losscontrol@vlct.org

Information for Supervisors

Every employer with hazardous chemicals in the workplace needs to have a Hazard Communication program and the required elements in place. The so called "hazcom" standard has been around for more than 30 years, yet compliance with the basic requirements still varies considerably. Ask your loss control consultant if you have any compliance or safety questions. Compliance elements include: a written program, container labeling, an inventory list of hazardous chemicals and a safety data sheet (SDS) for each, and employee training. This brief is intended as a safety refresher and does not meet all of the hazard communication training requirements. We suggest that you print this "Pictogram Card" and use it in your refresher training.

Talking Points for Training

Discuss your approach to product labeling in your facility. Do you rely on manufacturer labeling? If so, remind employees to not deface product labels and to look for quick hazard information there. This would be a good time to review the pictograms that you printed earlier. The pictogram is a quick "heads-up" about the nature of the chemical hazard. These are showing up on small containers and bulk products - so it's important that employees understand what the symbols mean.

It is important to review basic hazard categories of chemical products that are in use in your workplace. You don't need to review each product individually - just each

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hazard category. This part of the discussion should include:

- A review of the hazards posed by the hazard categories you have. For example, most public works garages have flammable liquids present. These pose an obvious fire danger, but may also pose skin irritation or even absorption hazards.
- Acids, caustic cleaners, or other products with a low or high pH are often present. This is another "category" of hazard that you should discuss (corrosives). If you conduct spray finishing, additional hazard categories may be present. Ask your loss control consultant if you have any questions about what chemical hazards are in your workplace.

Discuss the SDS and remind employees where the most important information is located. Key information includes: Sections 1 and 2 - these describe the name of the product and basic hazard information - and Section 8 which contains personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance. Remind employees where the SDS documents are located in your garage and that they can access them at will. It may also be helpful to practice finding an SDS so employees know how to find them if needed.

Reviewing the SDS, discussing the appropriate PPE and good storage practices will improve the level of safety within your garage and help avoid citations from VOSHA. As always, call us if you have questions about hazard communication!

Safety Training Attendance Roster

Trainer:	Training Date:
1.	9.
2.	10.
3.	11.
4.	12.

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5.	13.
6.	14.
7.	15.
8.	16.

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