

Health & Safety

Hazardous chemicals updates

Now the new website (www.sserc.org.uk) is up and running, the long process has begun of updating the hazardous chemicals section to bring it in line with GHS. So far:

1) We have changed the tables that used to contain the Risk and Safety Phrases so that they now contain the GHS Hazard statements and the new symbols for each substance.

2) We have replaced the concentration effects tables. Given the number of different categories in the GHS system, the tables would have become unwieldy so we have decided on a different, more visual approach. E.g. methanal (see diagram):

- Any solution below 0.33 mol dm^{-3} needs no label.
- Above that, up until 1.67 mol dm^{-3} , it has the warning and the health hazard symbol.
- At 1.17 mol dm^{-3} , it becomes an Acute Toxin by inhalation (Category 4) but this has no effect on the labelling. Cat 4 required the warning symbol but that is already there.
- Above 1.67 mol dm^{-3} , various new categories appear but there is no change in the labelling until 9.3 mol dm^{-3} when the solution becomes an Acute Toxin by inhalation (Category 3). This requires the skull and crossbones.
- At the same time the warning symbol is removed as it cannot appear along with a higher level symbol in the same hazard class.

3) The Safety phrases that were listed in the tables have been removed but have not been replaced with the GHS Precautionary Statements. In some cases there are 30 or more and it would simply become unwieldy. All the safety information itself is given in the body of the article so a simple list of the P Statements would seem superfluous.

We have started going through all the articles making sure that there is no conflict between our advice and that given in the P statements. There seems to be nothing significant that needs to be changed at the moment just a few changes in terminology. If there are entries that merit a significant change we will flag them up so that you are made aware the entry has been changed.

