

Central Chemical Inventory Management System

Introduction

HECHMET (**H**igher **E**ducation **C**ooperative for **H**azardous **M**aterial and **E**quipment **T**racking) is a consortium of Canadian universities (currently 14 and still growing) using Vertére Inventory Management (VIM) software system.

Why Keep an Inventory?

This EHS supplied, free of charge, web-based hazardous material inventory management system provides a comprehensive solution to centralized monitoring, tracking hazardous materials in campus wide and effectively managing chemical inventory in a laboratory.

- The Ontario Fire Marshall says (OFM-TG-02-2000) that “the fire department may request a current inventory of materials that are stored and/or processed on site to be retained for reference during an emergency.”
- Save money, time and space through quick and accurate physical inventory reconciliation.
 - Eliminate unneeded purchases and chemicals.
 - Avoid time wasted by running out of key chemicals through barcode tracking of chemicals from receipt to disposal.
 - Easy to manage chemical inventory – add, view, and update.
 - Save time finding chemicals – location is on system.
 - Track chemicals with specific shelf life and when to dispose of or test expired chemicals, e.g. peroxide formers.
- Dynamic system accessible to PIs, first responders, EHS, and regulators as required.
 - Accurate inventory allows emergency response personnel, including the Fire Department, to make crucial decisions about your lab based on the chemical information to quickly assess and attack fires. This will minimize delays in the Fire Departments response, thus minimizing damage and lost research.
 - Get your lab up and running again quickly after an emergency.
- Immediate access to regulator data, compliance with federal and provincial legislation.
 - Reporting capability helps deal with regulator queries quickly.
- Save money through option to share inventory information across collaborators, departments, or even campuses.
- Comprehensive inventory security control.
- Save time and money through access to ChemWatch for GHS compliant Safety Data Sheets
 - **No more paper SDS.**

University of Toronto joined HECHMET in late 2017. EHS provides assistance, training, and guidance for the implementation of HECHMET-VIM that works best for each individual department. The use of software is simple, flexible, and durable. Since January 2018, over 70,000 chemical items have been added into the HECHMET-VIM across all three university campuses. For further information and/or inquiry, please contact the University HECHMET administrator at: hechmet@utoronto.ca

The link to HECHMET-VIM: <https://apps.hechmet.ca/Login.aspx>

Procedures

Procedures will vary between departments. Below are the 3 typical models for handling the central inventory system, with the preferred models listed first.

1. The best option is that chemicals are received at a central location. Barcodes are applied to the containers by receiving staff and the chemical is assigned to the lab that ordered the chemical. The specific location within the room may have to be modified by the receiving lab after the chemical is brought to the lab.
2. Second best is that chemicals are received at the receiving area. After the lab representative picks up the chemical along with a reserve barcode and takes it to the lab, they open the box, and apply the barcode and scan the chemical into the system.
3. Chemicals are delivered directly to the lab. The lab obtains “reserve barcodes” from the departmental supply, applies them to the received bottle, and scans the chemical to the desired location.

Please contact [Wen Zhu](#), Health and Safety Officer, for additional information and assistance to implement the appropriate chemical inventory solution for your laboratory.