



MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Chairs, Principal Investigators

FROM: Lorraine Ferris, Associate Vice-President, Research Oversight & Compliance
Marc Drouin, Director, Research Safety & Compliance, Environmental Health & Safety, Research Oversight & Compliance Office

SUBJECT: Update on WHMIS & action items

DATE: 24 April 2019

The Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS), as governed by Ont. Regulation 860, went through its final year of transition from the WHMIS 1988 version of the regulation to the revised WHMIS 2015 version. Manufacturers, importers, and distributors must now supply chemicals with labeling and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) compliant with the WHMIS 2015 requirements. **This means that chemical products in U of T laboratories now have to comply with the labeling, SDS, and training requirements of the updated WHMIS 2015 regulation.**

Labeling: A recent amendment (January 21, 2019) to the Ontario regulations allows the University to apply a *workplace label* without covering up the valuable *supplier label* already on the bottles. Originally the amendment was to remove or cover the supplier label with a new supplier-compliant label which would have been very costly without added safety benefits. The recent amendment was requested by Ontario universities. We now need for all chemicals in laboratories to have either a WHMIS 2015 *supplier label* or a *workplace label*. Environmental health and Safety (EHS) is working on a standard label to be affixed on each chemical container that is not currently compliant with the current regulation (the majority of labels at UofT). EHS will provide laboratories with these chemical resistant labels with instructions for compliance. The actual affixing of the new workplace label will need to be done at the laboratory level.

Safety Data Sheets: In order to facilitate compliance, the University has purchased the chemical inventory system [Vertère](#), which provides no-charge access to a robust online chemical inventory system for members of the University community and is linked to the [CHEMWATCH](#) online Safety Data Sheet (SDS) library—available from computers on campuses only—to provide access to up-to-date safety information in compliance to WHMIS 2015. This chemical inventory system is being gradually rolled out to all three campuses. Departments are strongly encouraged to use the central chemical inventory, as in addition to providing direct access to online SDS information, it serves as an excellent emergency response tool for laboratories, potentially conferring saving of valuable research materials and preventing injuries. Please contact EHS ehs.office@utoronto.ca for further information on how to get access to the central chemical inventory.

Training: EHS has updated the [WHMIS on-line training](#) courses (EHS 101 – WHMIS and Lab Safety; EHS 112 – WHMIS Refresher; EHS 576 – WHMIS for non-lab users) and transferred these online courses to QUERCUS. All University employees and students working with, or who may be exposed to chemicals are required to take the initial WHMIS training course (EHS 101 WHMIS & Lab Safety), followed by the refresher course (EHS 112 WHMIS Refresher) at least every 3 years. Under the revised regulations, those who have completed the older WHMIS EHS005 (pre-2016) must now take the EHS112 WHMIS Refresher.