

THE SDS POCKET DICTIONARY

Fourth Edition

*Previously titled
The MSDS Pocket Dictionary*

What Does an SDS Mean?

Terms Used on SDSs

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The SDS Is for *You*

The safety data sheet (SDS) is one of those rare items that is elegantly functional. It can save your life.

The objective of the SDS is to concisely inform you about the hazards of the materials you work with so that you can protect yourself and respond to emergency situations. The law states that you must have access to SDSs and be taught to read and understand them.

This *SDS Pocket Dictionary* will help you and your employer work with and around hazardous materials more safely and intelligently. Enclosed is a straightforward explanation of what an SDS can tell you about a material. Refer to the Terms and Abbreviations section for definitions of new words you encounter on SDSs and in the pages that follow.

The SDS is like a crystal ball; if you study it, you will see the future. Read your SDSs and imagine how you would respond to emergencies and control your day-to-day exposures to materials.

Information on an SDS is the summarization of facts from many sources. Training, knowledge, and understanding of the technical data on an SDS will provide you with the skills, wisdom, and good judgment to safely deal with your occupational exposure to hazards. It will take some study to learn what an SDS says. The real challenge, however, is to understand what an SDS means.

The purpose of an SDS is to tell you

- the material's physical properties or fast-acting health effects that make it dangerous to handle
- the level of protective gear you need
- the first aid treatment to be provided when you are exposed to a hazard
- the preplanning needed for safely handling spills, fires, and day-to-day operations
- how to respond to accidents

Living Things Are Fragile

The objective of OSHA's Hazard Communication standard, also known as the Right-to-Know law is to protect living things, specifically your fragile body! Materials can cause injury to you, your coworkers, and the environment in many ways. The SDS tells you how.

return sheets you judge to be of poor quality to the supplier and request better sheets.

The SDS remains the cornerstone of the law. It is the basic tool that organizations and their employees have available to use as a guide to safe practices and emergency response. It's up to your employer to provide the SDSs and train you how to read and understand them. It's up to you to read and follow the instructions on the SDS.

Reading An SDS

Section 1. Identification

Information Required In This Section.

- Product identifier/name used on the label;
- Other means of identification;
- Recommended use of the chemical and restrictions on use;
- Name, address, and telephone number of the chemical manufacturer, importer, or other responsible party;
- Emergency phone number.

Why This Information Is Important. The data in Section 1 helps users make sure you have the exact information you need for the specific material you are working with. Thousands of materials with many similar names are found in workplaces. A mistake on the supplier's or employer's part in providing you the wrong sheet needs to be caught immediately, before you put your trust in the wrong information. In addition, having the supplier's phone number on the sheet can be a vital time-saver in the event of an accident involving the material or for requesting additional data.

Section 2. Hazards Identification

Information in This Section.

- Hazard Classifications of the chemical
- Signal word, hazard statement(s), symbol(s) and precautionary statement(s)
- Descriptions of any hazards not otherwise classified that have been identified during the classification process;
- Where an ingredient with unknown acute toxicity is used in a mixture at a concentration equal to at least 1% and the mixture is not classified based on testing of the mixture as a whole, a statement that X% of the mixture consists of ingredient(s) of unknown acute toxicity is required.

SDS Terms and Abbreviations

Abatement. Generally refers to a reduction in pollution either partially or completely.

Absolute. A chemical substance relatively free of impurities, e.g., absolute alcohol.

Absolute Pressure. The total pressure within a vessel, pipe, etc., not offset by external atmospheric pressure. See psia, psig.

Absorb. To soak up. The incorporation of a liquid into a solid substance, as by capillary, osmotic, solvent, or chemical action, where one substance has fully entered or permeated into the other. Not to be confused with the term “adsorb,” which means one substance sticks to the surface of the other.

Absorbed Dose. The amount of a substance that actually enters the body, usually expressed as milligrams of substance per kilogram of body weight (mg/kg)

ACA. See American Coatings Association.

ACC. See American Chemical Council.

ACS. See American Chemical Society.

Acceptable Daily Intake. ADI. The amount of a specific substance in food or drinking water that can be ingested (orally) on a daily basis over a lifetime without an appreciable health risk.

Acclimatization. The physiological and behavioral adjustments of an organism to changes in its environment.

Acetylcholine. ACh. A compound formed in the body and released at nerve endings to transmit nerve impulses.

ACGIH. See American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists.

Acid. An inorganic or organic compound that: **1)** is usually corrosive to human tissue and must be handled with care; **2)** has a pH of less than 7.0; **3)** neutralizes bases (alkalis) to form salts; **4)** dissociates in water yielding hydrogen or hydronium ions; **5)** may react with metals to yield hydrogen; and **6)** turns litmus paper red.

Acidosis. A condition of decreased alkalinity of the blood and tissues. Symptoms may include sickly sweet breath, headache, nausea, vomiting, visual disturbances; usually the result of excessive acid production. Tissues and CNS functions are disturbed.

Acrid. Irritating and bitter (referring to smell).

Action Level. The exposure level (concentration in air) at which OSHA regulations to protect employees take effect (29 CFR 1910.1001-1052); e.g., workplace air analysis, employee training, medical monitoring, and record keeping. Exposure at or above action level is termed occupational exposure. Exposure below this level can also be harmful. This level is *generally* half the PEL.

Acute Exposure. Exposure of short duration, usually to relatively high concentrations or amounts of material.