



Are you GHS ready?

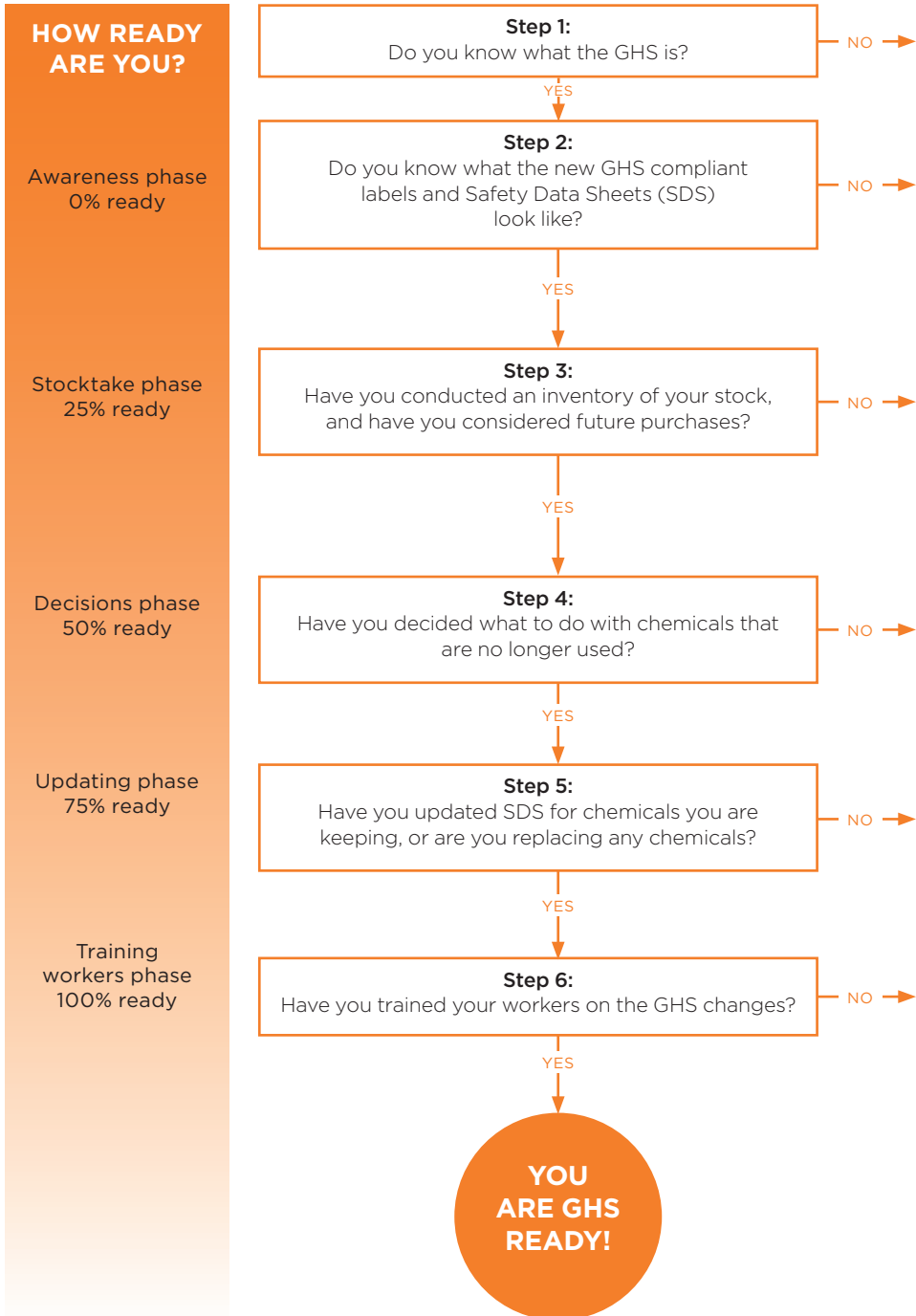


A new system of chemical classification and hazard communication is coming into effect and you need to be ready.

It's called the Globally Harmonised System (or GHS) of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. The new system replaces the existing system for classifying hazardous substances and dangerous goods in the workplace.

NSW businesses have until 31 December 2016 to become GHS ready. This document outlines six simple steps to help you get there.

Six simple steps to get ready for the GHS



- Visit safework.nsw.gov.au and review Chapter 7 of the WHS Regulation. You will also find information about the relevant Codes of Practice, and guidance material.

- The GHS uses nine standard hazard pictograms to show how chemicals are classified, with one of two signal words – **Danger** or **Warning**.
- New labels include simpler hazard and precautionary statements.
- The current Australian 16-header format of the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) will continue to apply.

- Conduct an inventory of your chemicals and identify which have GHS compliant and non-compliant labels and SDS.
- If your labels and SDS match the label sample in the SafeWork NSW *GHS: What you need to know* factsheet (catalogue no. SW08028, available on the SafeWork NSW website), they are GHS ready.
- Identify chemicals that are no longer used.
- Look for GHS compliant products before making future purchases, or consider buying smaller quantities.

- Make sure the chemicals you keep are correctly labelled in accordance with NOHSC and/or ADG Code or with the GHS, and obtain a new SDS.
- Alternatively, you can safely dispose or recycle them. You should contact an authorised chemical waste collector or recycler such as the local council, ChemClear, DrumMUSTER (for agricultural), or an Environment Protection Authority (EPA) licenced waste transporter. Visit epa.nsw.gov.au

- Contact the manufacturer/supplier/parent company to obtain the SDS for each chemical. (Note: Existing NOHSC and ADG Code labelled chemicals that you intend to keep past 31 December 2016 do not need to be re-labelled).
- Update your chemicals management systems, including keeping a record of the new SDS documents you have. Be sure to also update your hazardous chemicals register.

- Train your workers on how to understand the new GHS labels and SDS.
- Look at the new SDS for each of your chemicals. It may involve changes to existing controls and preventive measures that you need to be aware of.
- You can find more information regarding the changes to labels and SDS in the relevant Codes of Practice.

Top tips

- Consumer products being used in the workplace do not need to be GHS ready if the product has its original label and is being used in a way that is similar to household use.
- There are no changes for the transportation of chemicals. The Australian Dangerous Goods Code (ADG Code) still applies.
- There are exceptions for labelling small containers where limited space is available to display information. See Chapter 7 of the WHS Regulation for more information.

Arrangements for the implementation of GHS

A range of further policy and legislative changes for GHS labelling implementation have been agreed at a national level under the Work Health and Safety legislation. There are also some specific changes relating to Agricultural and Veterinary (AgVet) chemicals in New South Wales.

At a **national** level it has been agreed that:

- Hazardous chemicals manufactured or imported and labelled prior to 1 January 2017 will be exempt from GHS labelling requirements provided these chemicals are correctly labelled in accordance with the NOHSC and/or ADG Code. This means that products already in the supply chain will not need to be relabelled if they are correctly labelled in accordance with NOHSC and/or the ADG Code.
- All hazardous chemical products manufactured or imported from **1 January 2017** MUST be labelled in accordance with GHS requirements before being supplied.
- Existing hazardous chemicals (correctly labelled in accordance with NOHSC and/or ADG Code) already in the end user's workplace will not be required to be relabelled with GHS labels.
- Agricultural and Veterinary (AgVet) medicines listed in schedule 8 of the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons (SUSMP) will not require GHS labelling.
- AgVet medicines listed in schedule 4 of the SUSMP that are in a form and packaging consistent with direct administration to animals will not require GHS labelling.

In **New South Wales** it has been agreed that AgVet chemicals that are labelled in accordance with APVMA requirements will not need to comply with GHS labelling until 1 January 2018.

All these changes extend to suppliers of hazardous chemicals for their responsibilities on labelling.

Disclaimer

This publication may contain information about the regulation and enforcement of work health and safety in NSW. It may include some of your obligations under some of the legislation that SafeWork NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

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