

Information for Retailers on Hazard Labelling & Packaging of Chemical Products

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Hazardous chemical products must be labelled and packaged according to rules set out in specific classification, labelling and packaging legislation. Manufacturers, importers and formulators must ensure that such products are labelled and packaged correctly before being placed onto the market for sale. Retailers who supply chemical products do not themselves have responsibility for labelling chemicals with hazard information, unless they are selling their own brand products. They are, as suppliers of chemicals, responsible for ensuring that the hazardous chemicals for sale on their shelves are correctly labelled with the relevant hazard information and packaged accordingly.

What is a Chemical Product?

A chemical product may be any chemical ranging from an everyday household cleaning chemical to a chemical for use in an industrial setting. Products include paints, lubricating oils, glues, detergents (such as drain cleaners, toilet de-scalers, window cleaners, oven cleaners and bleach). A chemical product may be a substance on its own e.g. methanol or a mixture of substances e.g. paints and washing detergents.

When does a Chemical Product require a Hazard Label?

A chemical product must have a hazard label when it is classified as hazardous for a physical, human health and/or an environmental hazard.

A hazard label with relevant hazard information is required by law to allow users to identify the hazard(s) of the product. Due to the introduction of new legislation, all hazardous chemical products will require updated information on their hazard labels over the coming years.

Who is responsible for Hazard Labelling?

Manufacturers, Importers and Downstream Users (formulators) all have responsibilities in relation to hazard labelling of chemical products which are classified as hazardous. In addition, distributors, including retailers, who re-label or re-package hazardous chemicals with their own label, must ensure that the correct hazard information is on the label of the chemical product, before making it available for sale.



Role of the Retailer in Hazard Labelling

Hazardous chemicals are not permitted to be supplied on the market unless they are classified, labelled and packaged correctly. Retailers of chemical products who sell on the product for either professional use (use in the workplace) or general consumer use, should ensure that the correct hazard information is shown on the label of the product (although they themselves have not produced that product).

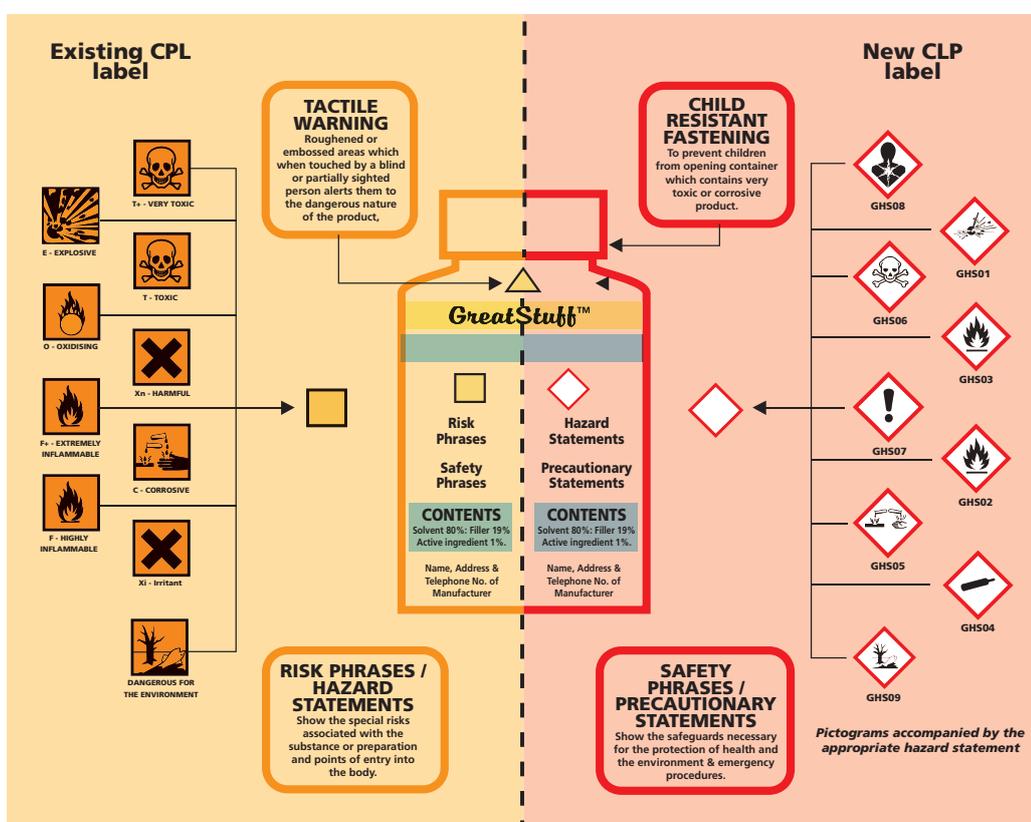


What is required on a Hazard Label?

In Ireland, the hazard label information must be in English. The information on the hazard label must reflect the hazard(s) of the chemical product to ensure that all users, including consumers, of the chemical are made aware of any hazardous properties before they purchase or use the chemical product. On hazardous chemical mixtures, such as detergents and paints, you may see labels which have the orange and black symbol (as shown below left). These symbols are being phased out and will be replaced with a hazard pictogram on a white background within a red-bordered diamond (as seen on the right below) which is in line with the new global system of hazard labelling for chemical products.

All chemical substances, e.g. methanol, must now be labelled with these new hazard pictograms. For chemical mixtures, the hazard labels will change over the next few years to reflect the updated legislation so that by 2017 all hazard labels will contain hazard pictograms.

Note: Only one type, i.e. CPL or CLP, will appear on the label.



What are the Packaging requirements for Hazardous Chemicals?

Child resistant fastenings compliant with relevant standards are required for products sold to the general public which are for example classified as toxic or corrosive. Similarly tactile warnings of danger are required on packaging of many chemical products. Packaging containing a hazardous chemical and sold to the general public is not permitted to have a shape or design which would attract the curiosity of children nor which would mislead any consumer.

Safety Data Sheets (SDSs):

Where the hazardous chemical product is used by professionals e.g. a painter/decorator, a SDS containing more detailed information on the hazards of the product and how to handle and store it safely must be made available upon request.

Further Information

The Health and Safety Authority's Website:

Chemicals webpages:
<http://www.hsa.ie/chemicals>

Publications pages:
<http://www.hsa.ie/publications>

HSA's Chemicals Help Desk:
chemicals@hsa.ie

Guidance on the website of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) on labelling:

<http://echa.europa.eu/web/guest/regulations/clp>