

Student Handout

WHMIS

Many chemicals used by auto mechanics are hazardous, and may cause conditions ranging from minor skin irritation to serious injury and disease. Some can be flammable or explosive. Others may be toxic, and may enter the body through the skin, the lungs, or the mucous membranes (eyes, nose, or mouth). Still others can burn the skin. If workers are expected to work with hazardous materials, their employer is required to inform them that the materials are hazardous, and train the workers in their safe use.

All B.C. workplaces that use materials identified as hazardous ("controlled products") by the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) are required to follow the WHMIS system. The system uses consistent labeling to help workers recognize hazardous materials. The system and labels provide specific information on handling, storing and disposing of such materials.

Examples of hazards

- solvents for cleaning engine parts
- acids for metal preparation
- body filling products that use cream hardeners, lead and zinc
- paint mixing, including solvents, isocyanates, lead and chromate

Safety tips

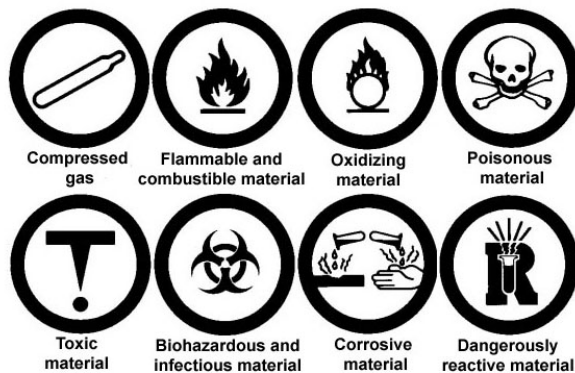
If you have been successfully trained in how to handle hazardous materials, you should be able to answer these 4 questions:

1. What are the hazards of the product you are using?
2. How do you protect yourself?
3. What should you do in case of an emergency or spill?
4. Where can you get more information on the product?



WHMIS Safety tips – Page 2

- Read the labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) that accompany chemicals.
- When using hazardous materials:
 - Use only as directed, and follow safe work procedures.
 - Use the appropriate personal protective equipment.
 - Do not do “hot work” (such as welding) where flammable chemicals are in use or stored.
 - Check that first aid is available.
- Store hazardous material in a properly ventilated, locked area
- Learn about and pay attention to WHMIS symbols:



Safety alert: Some brake and clutch linings still contain asbestos. The dust created when working with these parts could be harmful if inhaled. Never blow dust from brake drums or clutch housings using an airline. Use properly designed drum cleaning equipment and wet rags. Wear overalls and masks approved for working with brakes. Use grinding and drilling machines with integral exhaust ventilation, and an HVAC vacuum for dust removal.

