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The Informer

A monthly newsletter addressing workplace safety by Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association .

A pictogram says a thousand words

The past three years have seen the phase-in of new standards for chemical labeling and required safety information for the chemicals distributed in the U.S. This is a result of the U.S. adopting the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) used in places around the world. The purpose of GHS is to provide consistent and easily understandable information about the chemical products that employees use in their work activities. At the core of the new system is the use of just nine pictograms that identify the primary hazards associated with a particular product. The new requirements are principally enforced by OSHA.

Each of the nine pictograms are consistent in design, with a black symbol identifying the issue of concern. These pictograms are used on labels placed on product containers (space permitting) as well as within the new Safety Data Sheets (SDS) that replace the former Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS.) Pictograms will be included under Section 2: Hazards Identification of each SDS. Note that products may show more than one pictogram.

Below are the new pictograms that employers and employees will use to immediately identify hazards.

More information on the GHS system, its requirements for employers, and educational materials can be found at www.osha.gov/dsg/hazcom/. IMWCA can also help if you have questions or need guidance in implementing the new standards or conducting employee education. Contact your loss control representative or email losscontrol@iowaleague.org.

In addition, the Online University, which offers free training for IMWCA members, includes a 45 minute course on Safety Data Sheets. Then take our video quiz; details are on page 2.

<p>Health Hazard</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carcinogen • Mutagenicity • Reproductive Toxicity • Respiratory Sensitizer • Target Organ Toxicity • Aspiration Toxicity 	<p>Flame</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flammables • Pyrophorics • Self-Heating • Emits Flammable Gas • Self-Reactives • Organic Peroxides 	<p>Exclamation Mark</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritant (skin and eye) • Skin Sensitizer • Acute Toxicity (harmful) • Narcotic Effects • Respiratory Tract Irritant • Hazardous to Ozone Layer (Non-Mandatory)
<p>Gas Cylinder</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gases Under Pressure 	<p>Corrosion</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skin Corrosion/ Burns • Eye Damage • Corrosive to Metals 	<p>Exploding Bomb</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explosives • Self-Reactives • Organic Peroxides
<p>Flame Over Circle</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxidizers 	<p>Environment (Non-Mandatory)</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Toxicity 	<p>Skull and Crossbones</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Toxicity (fatal or toxic)

*image provided by OSHA

ONLINE UNIVERSITY COURSE HIGHLIGHT

Workplace
Ergonomics: ER60

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www.imwca.org

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Proper snow removal

As winter approaches we want to make sure we pause to remember proper snow removal methods. Shoveling and snow blowing can be potentially dangerous to your health if not performed properly. To help lower the risk of injury follow precautions when removing snow.

Snow removal is an expected chore for most people. Unfortunately, the risk of a back injury or a heart attack is also a reality. If you're not in good physical health or have a history of heart attacks or strokes, you are at a higher risk for injury. The combination of cold temperatures and physical activity increase the workload on your heart.

Take precautions, and avoid lifting and moving heavy snow. Warm yourself up before heading into cold, winter temperatures to remove snow. Drink plenty of fluids, and dress appropriately for removing snow. Always

dress in layers; wear a hat, scarf/face mask, gloves and waterproof boots with soles that are slip-resistant while outside.

When choosing the correct shovel make sure it fits your body size and level of strength. The proper way to lift a shovel full of snow is to keep your back straight while bending your knees and squatting down with your legs apart.

Keeping these tips in mind while removing snow will decrease your chance of injury, and hopefully make the inevitable chore of snow removal a little less treacherous.

Sources: Eureka Alert! The Global Source for Science News & www.popularmechanics.org

Online University webinars

IMWCA and FirstNet Learning, IMWCA's provider for our Online University, are coming to you! If you are interested in online learning, or signed up for IMWCA's Online University but aren't sure how to navigate the Web site, join us to get your questions answered.

With three webinars in December for IMWCA members, this is the perfect time to learn more and take advantage of all that online training has to offer.

The dates and registration links:

- Tuesday, Dec. 6 @ 10 a.m.
<https://fnl.webex.com/fnl/j.php?MTID=m0ef2e3815d3d04c18fb8cde1a52428e5>
- Thursday, Dec. 8 @ 3 p.m.
<https://fnl.webex.com/fnl/j.php?MTID=mb7bac27a8b3ad2cc88baedb7ca40b7db>
- Tuesday, Dec. 13 @ 3 p.m.
<https://fnl.webex.com/fnl/j.php?MTID=mebecefc1bd001e117e7835cd47fb2959>

Sign-up today!



Take the Quiz - GHS pictograms

Do you and your employees have the new Globally Harmonized System pictograms memorized. Find out with this video quiz. After all, the new system's consistent and easily understandable information about the chemical products isn't useful if you can't identify the hazards. Find this, and other, videos on IMWCA's YouTube channel.

**Save
the
Date**

How workers' compensation impacts your budget

Make plans to join us at one of six Regional Workshops across the state this February. Hear how other members have decreased their workers' compensation costs, making a positive impact on their budgets, and the experience of their employees.

Watch the *Informer* and the IMWCA Web site, www.imwca.org, for details later this month!



Safe winter walks

Walking is good for your health, and when the proper precautions are taken a winter walk on a brisk December day can be just what the doctor ordered to refresh your outlook. We all know that snow and ice can make walking dangerous. Even when sidewalks have been cleared and treated, you will probably encounter some slippery spots. Here are a few things to consider when you put on your coat and head outdoors.

First, wear shoes or boots that provide traction on snow and ice. Footwear with leather or plastic soles and heels should be avoided. Next, walk in designated walkways. Taking shortcuts over snow piles and across the snow-covered lawn are sure ways to take a tumble. Look ahead as you walk; scanning for slippery spots. A sunny day will warm the walkway, but beware of shadows that cross your path; they are spots where melting snow will reform into a thin layer of ice.

Ever watch a high-wire act, or a gymnast on a balance beam? They always extend their arms out to help maintain

balance. The lesson here is to apply the same concept when walking on slippery surfaces. Keep your hands out of your pockets and your arms extended or at the ready to help balance yourself. That means not carrying too much and using a cart or bag to help keep your balance.

A good, winter walking technique is to “walk like a penguin”. Here’s how:

- Point your feet out.
- Keep your neck straight.
- Go slowly.
- Take short steps or shuffle for stability.
- Extend your arms out to your sides.
- Bend slightly, walking flat-footed with your center of gravity directly over your feet.

Want to see a demonstration? www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmWhURt0_ik

When the weather is just not cooperating and you can’t get outside to get your walk in, a reasonable alternative is to take advantage of your surroundings. If you have stairs, take them. Make several trips! Hallways and even buildings with a large garage, such as a maintenance shop, are good places to take that exercise break until conditions improve.

Keep your records up-to-date

IMWCA members that have a volunteer fire department are required to maintain compliance with our Volunteer Firefighter Criteria. The criteria was adopted by the IMWCA Board of Trustees as a strategy to lower injuries among the volunteer firefighters covered by IMWCA. The criteria have been an important component in helping ensure these valuable volunteers return safely to the fire station after an emergency call.

When an IMWCA loss control representative makes a site visit to a member with a volunteer fire department, the representative will discuss the member’s compliance with the criteria. Having the required policies and records of fire-

fighter physicals up-to-date and available will greatly assist in determining compliance.

As a reminder, new firefighters joining a volunteer fire department must have a firefighter physical completed before hands-on training starts. Current firefighters must have ongoing firefighter physicals every five years.

Details about IMWCA’s Volunteer Firefighter Criteria can be found at www.imwca.org. Click on the “Loss Control” tab and select “Firefighter Programs” from the drop down menu. Please contact your IMWCA loss control representative with questions or email losscontrol@iowaleague.org.

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Comments or suggestions: contact Bethany Crile, newsletter editor, at (515) 244-7282 or bethanycrile@iowaleague.org.

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