TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-CHM · Hazardous Chemicals Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: All workers · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 8 November 2026

For workers who use, store or work near chemicals: reading the label and safety data sheet, and the controls that keep chemicals where they belong.

Cleaning products, fuels, solvents, paints, gases, pesticides and process chemicals can burn, poison, cause cancer or catch fire. Most harm happens when somebody did not know what they were handling, or used it in a way the label warns against.

This talk teaches workers to read the hazard pictograms and the label, find the safety data sheet, store and decant chemicals safely, use the right protective equipment, and respond to a spill or exposure.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Explain how hazardous chemicals can harm people: breathing in, skin and eye contact, swallowing, fire and explosion
- Read a chemical label, including the hazard pictograms, signal word and hazard and precautionary statements
- Find and use the safety data sheet (SDS) for a chemical before using it
- Describe the hazardous chemicals register and what it is for
- Store, segregate and decant chemicals safely, and label every container
- Choose and use the personal protective equipment the SDS calls for
- Respond to a spill or exposure, and report it

What it covers

Module	Covers
How chemicals harm	Routes of exposure; Acute and long-term effects; Fire, explosion and reactive chemicals
Labels and safety data sheets	Hazard pictograms and signal words; What the SDS tells you, section by section; The hazardous chemicals register
Safe use and storage	Substitution and ventilation before PPE; Storage and segregation of incompatible chemicals; Decanting and labelling; Personal protective equipment
When it goes wrong	Spill response and spill kits; First aid and the eyewash; Reporting exposures and near misses

© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

Activities

- Read the label: workers decode the label and SDS for two chemicals used on site and say what PPE and storage each needs
- What is wrong here: a photo or description of a chemical store with six problems to find

What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

Version 1.0 · 8 November 2026 · Orana Skills Centre. *© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.*

© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

TOOLBOX TALK

Hazardous Chemicals Awareness

Reading the label and safety data sheet, and the controls that keep chemicals where they belong

20–30 minutes · All workers

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

CHM

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ How chemicals harm people
- ✓ Labels, safety data sheets and the register
- ✓ Safe storage, decanting and PPE
- ✓ Spills, exposures and reporting

This talk is not

- ✕ Licensed work, such as pest control or fumigation
- ✕ Emergency response to a big spill or fire
- ✕ Respirator fit testing or confined space training
- ✕ Our procedure: **[Our chemical procedure]**

Awareness only. Licensed chemical work, emergency response and confined space entry need specific training, and for some work a licence.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

How chemicals harm

Chemicals get into the body four ways, and some can also burn, explode or react with each other.

- Breathing in vapours, fumes, mists, gases or dust
- Skin and eye contact: burns, rashes, and some absorbed through the skin
- Swallowing: from dirty hands, food or a mislabelled bottle
- Fire and explosion; reactions when chemicals mix
- Effects can be immediate (acute) or appear years later (long-term), such as cancer or organ damage

A composite example

- A worker mixes a bleach-based cleaner with an acid toilet cleaner in a bucket to 'make it stronger'. The bucket gives off a choking gas in a small washroom.
- Neither label was read. Both warned against mixing.

Most harm happens when someone did not know what they were handling.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

Duties under WHS or OHS laws

The business must

- Manage the risks of hazardous chemicals, using the order of controls
- Keep a current SDS and a register for every hazardous chemical
- Label containers, store chemicals safely, provide spill and first aid equipment
- Train, supervise and consult workers; monitor health where required

You must

- Read the label and SDS before you use a chemical
- Use, store and decant chemicals as instructed
- Wear the PPE provided, and look after it
- Report spills, exposures, leaks and damaged containers

Victoria's OHS laws call them hazardous substances and dangerous goods, with similar duties. Check your rules.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

Reading the label

On the label

- Product name: what it is
- Signal word: DANGER (more severe) or WARNING
- Hazard pictograms: red diamonds showing the type of hazard
- Hazard statements: what it can do to you
- Precautionary statements: how to use, store and dispose of it, and first aid
- The supplier's name and phone number

Common pictograms

- Flame: flammable
- Skull and crossbones: toxic, can kill
- Corrosion: burns skin and eyes, damages metal
- Health hazard (a figure with a star): cancer, organ damage, breathing
- Exclamation mark: irritant, harmful
- Gas cylinder: gas under pressure

No label? Do not use it. Report it.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.

TOOLBOX TALK · HAZ-CHM

Hazardous Chemicals Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

Chemicals can burn, poison, cause cancer or catch fire. Most harm happens when somebody did not know what they were handling. Keep this page.

How chemicals get in

- Breathing in vapours, fumes, gases or dust
- Skin and eye contact
- Swallowing: dirty hands, food, a mislabelled bottle
- Fire, explosion and chemicals that react when mixed

Reading the label

- Signal word: DANGER (more severe) or WARNING
- Pictograms: the type of hazard
- Hazard statements: what it can do
- Precautionary statements: use, storage, first aid

The SDS: where to look

- Section 2: hazards
- Section 4: first aid
- Sections 6 and 7: spills, handling and storage
- Section 8: exposure controls and PPE
- Register and SDSs: **[Where our SDS and register are kept]**

Store and decant

- Keep incompatible chemicals apart
- Bunded, closed, upright and labelled
- Never use a food or drink container
- Label every container; never mix chemicals

Before you use a chemical

- ☐ It is labelled
- ☐ I have read the label and the SDS
- ☐ I have the PPE section 8 calls for
- ☐ The area is ventilated
- ☐ I know where the spill kit and eyewash are

If it goes wrong

- Spill: warn others, keep people away; small spill only if trained, with the spill kit
- Eyes: eyewash straight away, at least 15 minutes
- Skin: remove clothing, rinse with plenty of water
- Poisons Information Centre 13 11 26; emergency 000
- Spill kit and eyewash: **[Spill kit and eyewash locations here]**

Stop and report when

- A container has no label
- You cannot find the SDS
- The PPE or ventilation is missing
- Report to: **[Who to report to here]**

Know what you are handling before you open it. Report every spill and exposure.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It does not cover licensed chemical work, emergency response to large spills, or confined space entry.

© 2026 Orana Skills Centre. All rights reserved.

SAMPLE · HAZ-CHM Hazardous Chemicals Awareness v1.0 · The full package contains the complete materials.