



**To:** Academic and Academic Support Department Managers and Supervisors  
**From:** Doug Dye, Safety/Compliance Training Co-ordinator  
**Subject:** WHMIS – General Requirements and Supervisor Responsibilities  
**Date:** September 22, 2005

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UW's Main Campus Joint Health and Safety Committee requested that a reminder be distributed to the University community that the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) has certain basic requirements with regard to handling, using and storing hazardous materials in the workplace.

### **MSDS Availability**

Every controlled product in your work/study area must have an associated MSDS readily available. The MSDS must be able to be accessed by all UW personnel that work with, or near the controlled product. An MSDS may be kept in either a hard (i.e., paper) or soft (i.e., electronic) format.

**Hard copies** must at all times be;

1. Visible, and
2. Accessible.

**Soft copies** must be accessible through a computer to employees/students in the area where the controlled products are stored or used. Ready access means;

1. Having a userID and password, if the computer is security enabled;
2. Knowing the server and file path to find the information;
3. If applicable, knowing how to use the MSDS management software; and
4. Having privileges and knowing how to print a hardcopy.

**Whether the MSDS is a hard or soft copy it must not be older than 3 years.**

**Maintain your MSDS collection as follows:**

### **Laboratories/Shops/Studios**

- Hard copies must be maintained for:
  - A) the 10 most commonly used controlled products , and
  - B) controlled products that are present in:
    1. a pipe;
    2. a piping system including valves;
    3. a process vessel; or
    4. a reaction vessel.
- As an alternative to hard copies, soft copies may be maintained for all remaining controlled products.

### **Controlled product storage areas**

- Hard copies must be maintained for storage areas with 10 or less controlled products.
- Soft copies must be maintained for storage areas with more than 10 controlled products.

### **Controlled product dispensing areas**

- Hard copies must be maintained for all controlled products dispensed in the area.

If you have any questions, or would like to arrange training, please refer to [www.safetyoffice.uwaterloo.ca](http://www.safetyoffice.uwaterloo.ca) or contact Doug Dye at ext. 35613.