Safety Note #48
HAZARD COMMUNICATION AWARENESS

Information available from the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) indicates 30 million American workers are exposed to hazardous chemicals at their workplaces. In addition, OSHA estimates there are 650,000 hazardous chemicals present in more than three million workplaces. The federal Hazard Communication Standard was developed to make sure employees are properly informed of hazardous substances present in the workplace, what health and safety hazards are posed by these workplace hazardous substances, and what protection is required when handling workplace hazardous substances. The equivalent state requirements are found under California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 8, Section 5194 which addresses hazard communication in California workplaces. ***Videos E-035 and S-035 Hazard Communication are available from the ANR Environmental Health and Safety Library at http://safety.ucanr.edu.***

Hazard Communication requirements in California workplaces encompass the five elements presented below:

1. Determination of Hazardous Substances [CCR Title 8, Section 5194 (d)]
   - Employers shall determine whether substances at the workplace are hazardous or subject to Proposition 65.
   - Hazardous substances are listed in the following:
     a. *The Hazardous Substances List* in CCR Title 8, Section 339.
     b. *Toxic and Hazardous Substances* in 29 CFR, Part 1910, Subpart Z.
     c. *Threshold Limit Values for Chemical Substances in the Work Environment,* ACGIH, 1991-1992.
     d. *Sixth Annual Report on Carcinogens* by the National Toxicology Program, 1991.
     e. *Monographs* by the International Agency for Research on Cancer.
     f. *Proposition 65 List* in CCR Title 22, Section 12000.
   - Manufacturer's information about hazardous substances is available on Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs).

2. MSDS Information [CCR Title 8, Section 5194 (g)]
   - Employers shall review MSDSs regularly to verify that employees are provided the most current information about hazardous substances.
   - Employees shall receive MSDS training and know where MSDSs are located in the workplace (see Safety Note #21 Material Safety Data Sheets).

3. Labeling Information [CCR Title 8, Section 5194 (f)]
   - Labels that identify contents and hazards shall be prominently located on containers.
   - Container labels shall always be written in English and legible.
   - Proposition 65 substances shall be identified on container labels or by posting conspicuous signs in the workplace.

4. Written Hazard Communication Program [CCR Title 8, Section 5194 (e)]
   - Employers are required to have a written hazard communication program if employees are exposed to hazardous substances in the workplace.
   - Each ANR location must maintain an inventory of the hazardous substances known to be present in the workplace.
   - The written Hazard Communication Program shall be made available at each ANR location and is available online at: http://safety.ucanr.edu/files/2858.pdf

5. Employee Training [CCR Title 8, Section 5194 (h)]
   - Employees shall be provided with information and training on hazardous substances in their work area when they are initially assigned and whenever a new hazard is introduced into their work area.
   - Employees shall be informed of any operations in their work area where hazardous substances are present.
   - Employees shall be told about the availability and location of the ANR Hazard Communication Program.
   - Employee training shall include descriptions of hazardous substances used in work areas and appropriate employee personal protective equipment, work practices, and emergency procedures.

The following types of materials are exempt from Hazard Communication requirements [CCR Title 8, Section 5194 (b)(5)]: any hazardous wastes, wood products that will not be cut or processed, materials for personal consumption by employees (such as tobacco, foods, drugs, cosmetics), or consumer products, provided that employee exposure is not significantly greater than the exposure that occurs through normal consumer use of the product.