

## 5.10 EMPLOYEE RIGHT-TO-KNOW

The "Hazard Communication Rule" (*CFR 1910.1200*), also known as the Right-to-Know Law, was promulgated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in 1983. In 1984, the State of Iowa passed the "Hazardous Chemical Risks Right-to-Know Act" which incorporates provisions of the Federal OSHA, Hazard Communication Rule, with additional requirements for the transmission of information to emergency response teams and the community. Because of Iowa's approved OSHA program, employers in Iowa are required to comply with the state law.

The purpose of the law is to ensure that the hazards of all chemicals are evaluated. Results of these evaluations are to be transmitted to affected employers, and in turn, to affected employees.

Information is transmitted via Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) which include the following information:

- Chemical name
- Physical and chemical characteristics
- Signs and symptoms of exposure
- Precautions for safe handling
- Possible routes of entry into the body
- Emergency first aid
- Name, address, and telephone number of manufacturer

Each office should have a safety coordinator whose duties include maintaining two manuals for the office:

Right-to-Know Written Hazard Communication Manual  
Product Inventory and Material Safety Data Sheets Manual

All contractors have the same responsibility and are required to have MSDS information readily available for chemicals used on the project. Inspectors should ask to review site specific MSDS manuals, both to be sure that one exists and to familiarize themselves with hazards which may exist at the worksite.