

WHMIS 2015 is a comprehensive hazard identification system for workplace hazardous materials. The following FAQ document has been developed to aid in understanding changes to WHMIS legislation in Ontario and Canada. For additional information, please contact the Office of Risk Management at [safety@uOttawa.ca](mailto:safety@uOttawa.ca).

## 1. What is WHMIS 2015?

WHMIS 2015 is the successor to a previously implemented WHMIS training and hazard identification system. WHMIS 2015 updates the way that hazardous materials are classified, identified and labelled.

## 2. Why is it called “WHMIS 2015”?

WHMIS 2015 is the name that Health Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development have given to WHMIS legislation that was updated in 2015 and featured a three-year transition period. To remain consistent, uOttawa has adopted the same name. The terms “WHMIS 2015”, “new WHMIS”, and “updated WHMIS” all refer to WHMIS 2015.

## 3. What are the principle differences between WHMIS 1988 and WHMIS 2015?

- Controlled products are now called hazardous products.
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are now called Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- There are new rules for classifying hazardous products, which are now divided into two major groups of hazards—[physical hazards and health hazards](#)— and corresponding new pictograms.
- Container label requirements have changed, including pictograms that correspond to the updated hazard classes.
- The SDS is now divided into sixteen (16) sections, rather than nine (9) sections, and contains more information.

## 4. How does WHMIS 2015 improve workplace health and safety?

WHMIS 2015 improves health and safety in several ways, including by:

- adding new criteria for classifying hazardous products that states the severity of the hazard;
- addressing some hazardous properties that were not addressed in WHMIS 1988;
- standardizing language on labels and safety data sheets, helping to properly interpret information can be interpreted properly and in a consistent manner, regardless of the supplier, with emergency information appearing first;
- changing the pictograms to make them more visually descriptive and easily understood;
- by facilitating and standardizing processes for international trade in hazardous products, with more than 70 countries having adopted the new hazard identification system.

## 5. When do the new WHMIS requirements take effect?

The transition from WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015 is a three-phase process. Employer requirements take effect in Phase 3, which begins on September 1, 2018 and ends on November 30, 2018. Employers should only be receiving hazardous products with WHMIS 2015 labels and safety data sheets during Phase 3. By December 1, 2018, the transition to WHMIS 2015 will be complete and there should be no hazardous products in the workplace with WHMIS 1988 labels and/or safety data sheets. All personnel must also have completed WHMIS 2015 training.

## 6. What are my responsibilities?

The key responsibilities of suppliers, employers and workers found in the WHMIS 2015 legislation remain essentially the same as those they had under WHMIS 1988. Therefore,

### Workers must

- Participate in required training (including WHMIS 2015 training);
- Identify and assist in controlling hazards in the workplace;
- Protect themselves and others in the workplace.

### The University and its supervisors must

- Educate and train workers on the safe use of hazardous products;
- Ensure hazardous products are properly labelled;
- Prepare workplace labels and safety data sheets (as required);
- Provide access to up-to-date safety data sheets (hard copies or electronic access);
- Demonstrate due diligence in the protection of workers.

## 7. What do I do with containers that have old (WHMIS 1988) labels?

By December 1, 2018, product labels on containers of hazardous products must meet WHMIS 2015 requirements. If there are products with WHMIS 1988 labels in your lab, workshop or area of responsibility, the supervisor must ensure that:

1. The contents of the container are consumed and the container is properly disposed of prior to December 1, 2018; or
2. The contents of the container is safely disposed of via the uOttawa [hazardous waste program](#) prior to December 1, 2018; or
3. The WHMIS 1988-labeled product is decanted into another container and a WHMIS 2015 workplace label is applied to the new container. Workplace labels can be printed via [ChemWatch](#) or individually and must contain:
  - a. Product identifier (product name matching that on the SDS),
  - b. Information for the safe handling of the product\*, and
  - c. A statement that the safety data sheet is available

*\*Information for the safe handling of the product* refers to precautions that a person must take to minimize potential adverse health effects or injury. These precautions can be conveyed through pictures, words, symbols or equivalent means, and are usually available on the safety data sheet.

WHMIS 1988 Supplier Label



**METHANOL DANGER POISON**  
**MÉTANOL DANGER POISON**

FLAMMABLE VAPEUR HARMFUL  
 INFLAMMABLE VAPEURS NOCIVES

MAY CAUSE BLINDNESS IF SWALLOWED  
 PEUT PROVOQUER LA CÉCITÉ, SI AVALÉ

Keep away from heat, sparks and flame. No smoking. Container must be grounded when being emptied. Vapour may travel long distance. Avoid contact with eyes and skin. Do not inhale vapours or mist. Do not take internally. Harmful if absorbed through the skin.  
 Garder loin de la chaleur, des étincelles et des flammes. Ne pas fumer. Brancher le contenant à une prise de terre avant de le vider de son contenu. Les vapeurs peuvent s'étendre sur de longues distances. Éviter tout contact avec les yeux et la peau. Ne pas respirer les vapeurs. Ne pas absorber. Nocif si absorbé par la peau.

FIRST AID: In case of contact, immediately flush eyes and skin with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes.  
 Si avalé, provoquer le vomissement en introduisant un doigt dans la gorge ou en faisant absorber de l'eau savonneuse à la victime. Répétez jusqu'à cessation du vomissement. Sortir au grand air, si indisposé par les vapeurs.

GET MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY.  
 OBTENIR DES SOINS MÉDICAUX IMMÉDIATS.

PRECAUTIONS: Wear chemical goggles and resistant gloves. Wash thoroughly after handling. Use with enough ventilation to keep below TLV. Keep container closed. Never use pressure to empty container.  
 PRÉCAUTIONS: Porter des lunettes protectrices (pour produits chimiques) et des gants résistants. Se laver minutieusement après usage. Utiliser dans un endroit bien aéré, afin de maintenir un niveau de vapeurs tolérable. Garder le contenant fermé. Ne jamais user de pression en vidant le récipient.

SEE MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET VOIR FICHE SIGNALÉTIQUE

ABC Company  
 Anytown, Ontario Telephone 123-4567

WHMIS 2015 Supplier Label



**Methanol / Méthanol**

**Danger** **Danger**

Fatal if swallowed. Causes skin irritation.  
 Mortel en cas d'ingestion. Provoque une irritation cutanée.

**Precautions:**  
 Wear protective gloves. Wash hands thoroughly after handling. Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product.  
 Porter des gants de protection. Se laver les mains soigneusement après manipulation. Ne pas manger, boire ou fumer en manipulant ce produit.

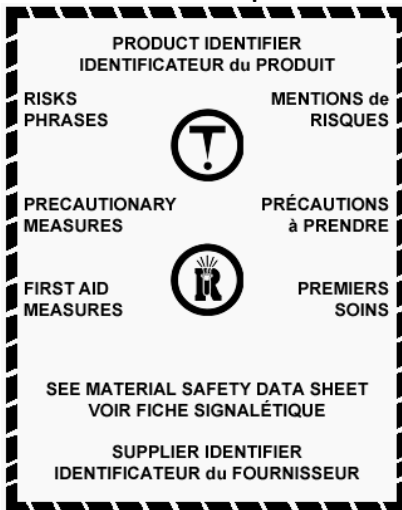
**Store locked up.**  
 Dispose of contents/containers in accordance with local regulations.  
 Garder sous clef. Éliminer le contenu/récipient conformément aux règlements locaux en vigueur.

**IF ON SKIN:** Wash with plenty of water. If skin irritation occurs: Get medical advice or attention. Take off contaminated clothing and wash it before reuse.  
 EN CAS DE CONTACT AVEC LA PEAU: Laver abondamment à l'eau. En cas d'irritation cutanée: Demander un avis médical/consulter un médecin. Enlever les vêtements contaminés et les laver avant réutilisation.

**IF SWALLOWED:** Immediately call a POISON CENTRE or doctor. Rinse mouth.  
 EN CAS D'INGESTION: Appeler immédiatement un CENTRE ANTIPOISON ou un médecin. Rincer la bouche.

Compagnie XYZ, 123 rue Machin St, Mytown, ON, N0N 0N0 (123) 456-7890

WHMIS 1988 Workplace Label



**PRODUCT IDENTIFIER IDENTIFICATEUR du PRODUIT**

**RISKS PHRASES** **MENTIONS de RISQUES**

**PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES** **PRÉCAUTIONS à PRENDRE**

**FIRST AID MEASURES** **PREMIERS SOINS**

SEE MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET VOIR FICHE SIGNALÉTIQUE

SUPPLIER IDENTIFIER IDENTIFICATEUR du FOURNISSEUR

WHMIS 2015 Workplace Label



**Produit ABC / ABC Product**

Mortel en cas d'ingestion. Provoque une irritation cutanée. Porter des gants de protection (polychloroprène). Se laver les mains soigneusement après manipulation. Ne pas manger, boire ou fumer en manipulant ce produit.

Fatal if swallowed. Causes skin irritation. Wear protective gloves (neoprene). Wash hands thoroughly after handling. Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product.

Pour des renseignements supplémentaires, consulter la FDS. Refer to the SDS for more information.

## 8. There are consumer products in my area of responsibility; what are my responsibilities with respect to consumer products?

Consumer products (which are materials intended for consumer use, and provided in volume, such as cleaners, adhesives, lubricants, etc.) are not subject to WHMIS 2015 requirements. However, as an employer, product hazards and safe work procedures must be communicated to personnel using the product. In many cases, SDSs are available from the product supplier and we recommend that they be provided and made available.

### **9. I maintain a binder or electronic database with WHMIS 1988 MSDS sheets; what should I do to comply with new WHMIS 2015 requirements?**

All MSDS (9-section) sheets, whether hard copy or electronic, must be replaced with WHMIS 2015 SDS (16-section) sheets .

### **10. Where can I obtain updated SDS sheets?**

WHMIS 2015 SDS sheets are available from the product supplier and provided at time of purchase. Several suppliers of hazardous materials also maintain electronic copies of SDSs on their website. Generic SDS sheets are available via [ChemWatch](#).

### **11. How will the WHMIS 2015 workshop be delivered?**

The WHMIS 2015 workshop is entirely online. There are no in-class alternatives planned at the moment.

### **12. What is the passing mark for the quiz?**

A user is required to achieve 75% on the quiz.

### **13. Will there still be categorized workshops?**

Yes, two workshops (WHMIS 2015 for Office Workers and WHMIS 2015 for Lab Workers) continue to be offered.

### **14. How can I access the workshop?**

Please use the following link to access the required workshop.

- [WHMIS 2015 for Office Workers](#)
- [WHMIS 2015 for Laboratory Workers](#)

### **15. How long does WHMIS 2015 take to complete?**

WHMIS 2015 has been designed to take approximately 60 to 75 minutes. In some cases, the workshop may be completed in less/more time.

### **16. I do not have a uOttawa employee or student ID; how can I take the WHMIS 2015 workshop?**

If you do not have a uOttawa employee or student ID, you may register for a [guest account](#). A password will be emailed to the email address you provide. The account is required in order to complete the WHMIS 2015 quiz; however, the workshop content may be browsed without a guest account. The account may also be used to register for other uOttawa workshops.

### **17. I do not remember my password; what should I do?**

Contact the IT Help Desk at ext. 6555.

### **18. Who is required to complete the workshop?**

All workers, which includes academic and support staff and in certain cases students, are required to successfully complete the WHMIS training applicable to their exposure to hazardous materials.

- If you work in a lab (for example, a science, engineering or medical lab) or if you handle dangerous products, you must complete the [WHMIS 2015 training for personnel working in a laboratory](#).
- If you work in an office that deals with a lab (for example, a science, engineering or medicine lab) you must complete the [WHMIS 2015 training for clerical staff](#).
- In all other cases, the [Worker Health and Safety Awareness Workshop](#) already addresses the fundamentals of WHMIS 2015. As a result, if you work in an office that does not deal with a lab, special environments or hazardous product handling, you are not required to complete additional WHMIS 2015 training unless specified by your supervisor.

### **19. Once I have completed the WHMIS 2015 workshop, where can I obtain my WHMIS certificate?**

WHMIS 2015 certificates are sent automatically by email to your registered account (i.e. uOttawa email) immediately following successful completion of WHMIS 2015. Alternatively, certificates are also available in PDF format in your [LRS learning profile](#).

### **20. If I have taken WHMIS 2015 through another employer, am I required to take it at uOttawa?**

Yes: WHMIS 2015 is employer-specific and must be successfully completed at uOttawa.

### **21. There is a problem with my certificate; to whom should I speak?**

Please contact [safety@uottawa.ca](mailto:safety@uottawa.ca).

### **22. I am a visiting researcher or student; can I complete the WHMIS training before arriving at uOttawa?**

Yes, if you have been assigned an employee or student number, you can complete the WHMIS 2015 workshop from afar. If you have not yet been assigned an employee or student number, you can register for a [guest account](#).

### **23. Where can I find more information about WHMIS 2015 requirements?**

Contact the Office of Risk Management at [safety@uottawa.ca](mailto:safety@uottawa.ca) or the [Faculty Health, Safety and Risk Manager](#). You can also find further information in the following resources:

- [Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development](#)
- [Health Canada](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#)