

CHIP is the law that applies to suppliers of dangerous chemicals. Its purpose is to protect people and the environment from the effects of those chemicals by requiring suppliers to provide information about the dangers and to package them safely.

What's CHIP for?

CHIP helps protect people and the environment from the ill effects of chemicals by requiring suppliers to:

- Identify the hazards (dangers) of the chemicals they supply.
- Give information about the chemicals' hazards to their customers, and
- Package the chemicals safely.

CHIP applies to the supply of chemicals. There are different laws for controlling them in the workplace and on the transport of dangerous chemicals. By supply we mean sell, offer for sale, provide commercial samples, import, or transfer chemicals from workplace to workplace.

What are the basic requirements of CHIP?

The basic requirement of CHIP is for you to decide whether the chemical you supply is dangerous. CHIP, with its Approved Classification and Labelling Guide (ACLG), sets out the rules for this. They tell you how to:

- Decide what kind of hazard the chemical has, and
- Explain the hazard by assigning a simple sentence that describes it (known as a 'risk phrase' or 'R-phrase' for short). This process is known as classification.

Providing hazard information

After deciding what the classification is, you have to:

- Tell your customers about the hazards, and
- Tell them, as far as you can, how they can use your chemicals safely.

You have to do this by:

- A label, and
- A safety data sheet (a must if your customer uses the chemical at work, but other equally good measures may be used for consumers).

Labelling

If you supply a dangerous chemical in a package, the package must be labelled. If the chemical is not supplied in a package (e.g. if the chemical is supplied from a tanker or down a pipeline), then you don't have to provide a label - it wouldn't be practical!

The aim of the label is to:

- Tell anyone handling the package or using the chemicals about its hazards, and
- Give brief advice on what precautions are needed.

CHIP specifies what has to go on the label (e.g. the chemical's name), and also tells you how packages should be labelled (e.g. the size of the label).

Safety data sheets

Safety data sheets are important in helping you, or anyone you supply, make the workplace safe and to protect the environment. More specifically, a safety data sheet contains information to help you make a risk assessment as required by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH).

The safety data sheet itself is not an assessment. However, it will describe the hazards, helping you to assess the probability of those hazards (i.e. the risk) arising in the workplace.

Safety data sheets used to be required by CHIP. This requirement now appears in the REACH Regulation.

Safety data sheets are a MUST if your chemical is dangerous and supplied for use at work, whether in packages or not. Safety data sheets are also needed if your chemical is not classified as dangerous but contains small amounts of a dangerous substance(s).

For more information on CHIP please visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg350.pdf> to download An introduction to CHIP 4.