



ERMA NEW ZEALAND

INFORMATION SHEET

CODE OF PRACTICE HSNOCOP 2-1
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Signage for Premises Storing Hazardous Substances and Dangerous Goods

A quick word about Codes of Practice: What are they and what is their significance?

Codes of Practice are able to be approved by the Authority under Sections 78 and 79 of the HSNO Act. In practice they are approved by the ERMA New Zealand Chief Executive under delegated authority.

Codes of Practice are “how to” documents. They tell you how you can meet the requirements of the HSNO regulations and controls, in a way that is legally defensible. However, they are not mandatory! If you have other ways of meeting the requirements then you can adopt those instead.

Most Codes will be developed by industry or user groups rather than by ERMA New Zealand.

Where can you get a copy of this Code?

Code of Practice HSNOCOP 2-1 was developed by the New Zealand Chemical Industry Council (NZCIC) and can be purchased from their office at a price of \$85 (plus GST) in either hard copy or CD-ROM format. The contact details for NZCIC are as follows:

PO Box 5069
Wellington
Email: Joanna@nzcic.org.nz
Website: www.nzcic.org.nz

However, a hard copy of the Code will be held at reception in our Wellington Office for inspection.

The Code will be available from 1 October 2004.

What is this Code about and who should use it?

This Code of Practice explains the requirements contained in the HSNO Hazardous Substances Regulations for signage at sites and premises containing hazardous substances and provides a means of compliance with those regulatory requirements. In so doing, it provides practical advice to those responsible for sites where hazardous substances are stored to safeguard the persons involved and avoid any adverse effects to the environment.

The Code is intended for premises where hazardous substances and dangerous goods are manufactured, stored, handled or used. It is not intended for use in transport operations which are covered by New Zealand Standard NZS 5433:1999.

The Code specifically provides a means of compliance with the requirements relating to signage at a site containing hazardous substances given in Part 3 of the Hazardous Substances (Identification) Regulations 2001 and regulation 42 of the Hazardous Substances (Emergency Management) Regulations 2001. It also addresses the signage requirements for particular operations involving hazardous substances specified in the Hazardous Substances (Classes 1 to 5 Controls) Regulations 2001 and the Hazardous Substances (Classes 6, 8 and 9 Controls) Regulations 2201, and for laboratories specified in the Hazardous Substances (Exempt Laboratories) Regulations 2001.

In addition to addressing HSNO requirements, the NZCIC document also covers signage for other types of substances having the potential to harm people or the environment, such as infectious substances, radioactive materials, hazardous waste and other types of substances or manufactured articles classified as Dangerous Goods under transport legislation.

However, the NZCIC document has been approved by ERMA as a code of practice under the HSNO Act only in respect of those matters applicable to the requirements of the Hazardous Substances Regulations 2001.

Signage at a location where hazardous substances are present provides information that is necessary to ensure that people entering the location understand the hazards posed by those substances and take the appropriate precautions.

Also, to facilitate an immediate effective response to incidents, emergency responders need accurate, comprehensive and clear information. Fire fighters, Police and those first at the site of an incident need information that can be readily distinguished and correctly interpreted at a distance. Such personnel are trained to interpret graphical and coded information which is normally provided by signage. The examples provided in this Code will meet these needs.

What is in the Code?

It is not feasible to give a full summary of the Code in this information sheet, but the material below is intended to give a good indication of coverage.

The HSNO hazardous substances regulatory requirements relating to signage can be summarised in the following key points:

- Signs must be located where they will be noticed by persons entering the site where hazardous substances are located (at above the specified trigger quantities) and must;
- advise that the location contains hazardous substances,
- describe the hazardous property and nature of the hazard(s) of the substance,

- describe the precautions needed to safely manage the substance,
- identify appropriate emergency response agency(s) or personnel and the means of contacting them,
- provide sufficient information to advise any of the trained persons and the emergency service provider(s) of the immediate emergency response actions for the hazardous substances present,
- be easily understood
- be able to be easily read at a distance under varying conditions.

The Code addresses these requirements by providing tables detailing the trigger quantities for each hazard classification for which signage is required and by providing a comprehensive set of examples of signs for the various hazard classifications and for some specific substances.

The examples address the relevant design considerations for the signs, such as dimensions and layout of content such as text and pictograms. A full set of UN Transport and GHS consistent pictograms are given in colour, together with the appropriate dimensions that should be used.

There is also a series of positional diagrams that show where signage should be located in respect of entrances to sites or buildings on differing site layouts or within different types of buildings.

A model checklist is also provided for auditing purposes to help verify compliance with the provisions of this Code.

Conclusion

This Information Sheet has been prepared by ERMA New Zealand to help you decide whether the Code of Practice HSNOCOP 2-1 would be of relevance to you. It is not in itself a Code of Practice.

ERMA New Zealand Information Sheets

ERMA New Zealand publishes information sheets on a range of topics to provide background information on current issue or proposals being dealt with by the Authority.

All publications may be viewed and downloaded from our website at www.ermanz.govt.nz or may be requested by contacting ERMA New Zealand, P O Box 131, Wellington. Ph +64 4 916 2426 Fax +64 4 914 0433 Email info@ermanz.govt.nz.