

Chemicals and Personal Protective Equipment

Chemicals common to winery operations include sulfur dioxide, chlorine, caustics, citric acid, nitrogen, and carbon dioxide. Sulfur dioxide and the other chemicals used in multiple tasks can damage the skin and eyes, cause respiratory illness and create other health issues. Employees have the need and right to know what hazardous substances they are exposed to in the workplace, and what protective measures should be used to prevent chemical injuries and illnesses.

It is an important to have a written, implemented Hazard Communication Program. Develop and implement an effective program that

- identifies chemical exposures
- outlines steps to reduce exposures
- establishes safe work practices
- requires appropriate training for all managers and employees.

The OSHA website (www.osha.gov) has resources to help you develop a program. Some states have individual and additional resources.

Safety precautions to protect employees include:

- Maintain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals in the work environment. MSDS provide information on specific chemical hazards and protective measures.
- Develop safe work practices for typical use of chemicals, non-routine use, and emergency situations such as spills and accidental releases.
- Label, tag, or mark containers of chemicals with the identity of the material and appropriate hazard warnings.
- Train employees and managers so that they understand the chemical hazards in their work areas.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment to employees including eye/face protection, gloves, boots, and chemical suits.
- Require employees to wear full protective clothing when handling caustics such as sodium or potassium hydroxide. Protective clothing includes chemical suits, gloves, rubber boots, and face/eye protection. Full protective clothing is also often needed when handling open containers.

- Require eye protection such as safety glasses, goggles and face shields to protect your winery workers from hazards related to their job tasks. These include broken glass on the bottling line, high pressure hot/cold water washers, and chemical splashes.
- Require respiratory protection when working with certain chemicals such as sulfur dioxide, chlorine gas, ammonia, and carbon dioxide. Managers and supervisors should select respirators designed for the specific chemical exposures.

Employees whose job tasks require respirators should be included in your respiratory protection program. Have a written, implemented Respiratory Protection Program. The program should include employee training on the use of their respirator, proper maintenance and storage, fit testing, and medical surveillance.

Zenith provides workplace safety resources at: **TheZenith.com**[®]

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