GHS – Landscaping Fatality File



Fatal Chemical Exposure Due to GHS Labeling Failure in Landscaping

On March 15, 2023, a fatal chemical exposure incident occurred at a landscaping site in Vancouver, British Columbia, resulting in the death of a 41-year-old worker, David Wilson. Wilson was handling a pesticide that was not properly labeled according to the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for classification and labeling of chemicals. The chemical had been transferred to an unlabeled container, and Wilson, unaware of the toxic nature of the substance, did not take necessary precautions during its application.

During the application process, Wilson was exposed to the pesticide’s fumes, leading to acute respiratory distress. Despite receiving immediate medical attention, he succumbed to his injuries shortly after being admitted to the hospital.

The investigation revealed that the landscaping company failed to comply with GHS requirements, which mandate proper labeling, safety data sheets (SDS), and employee training on handling hazardous chemicals. The absence of clear labels and warnings contributed directly to the fatal incident.

In response, the company has since implemented a comprehensive chemical safety program, ensuring all hazardous substances are properly labeled according to GHS standards, that safety data sheets are readily accessible, and that all employees receive thorough training on chemical safety and emergency response.