Is this a Proper GHS/Hazcom Label?

What's wrong with this picture?



The answer, of course, is no. And while it may be better than no label at all, this makeshift "UNKNOWN" tag is appallingly inadequate—especially when you consider that this photo comes from a chemical laboratory.

The Moral: Hazardous chemicals must have a proper Hazcom/GHS label. If you're not sure what's inside a container, either find somebody who does or get rid of the thing. And please, please do not keep the container in a pantry!!

GHS & Hazcom Labels: What's at Stake

5 Reasons You Need to Know about Hazcom & GHS Labels

1. You work with or near hazardous chemicals that can make you seriously ill or even kill you
2. OSHA and company rules guarantee your Right to Know about these chemical hazards
3. One of the most important parts of ensuring your Right to Know is via putting labels on containers of hazardous chemicals listing key information about the chemical, why it's dangerous and what to do to protect yourself
4. Even if you're already familiar with chemical labels, new laws require replacing those old "Hazcom" labels with new what are called "GHS labels"
5. The new GHS labels aren't required until 2015; so for the next 2 years, you're likely to see both old Hazcom and new GHS labels at your workplace

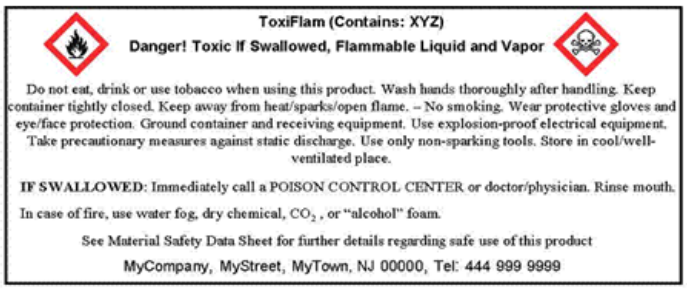
3 Differences between Hazcom & GHS Labels

1. Appearance

Here's a side by side comparison of Hazcom (HCS) and GHS labels:



HCS Label



GHS Label

Notice that the GHS label:

- Lists more information than the current label;
- Includes graphic symbols; and
- Contains a third color—red.

2. Information Label List

The current Hazcom (HCS) label must list:

- Identity of hazardous chemical, i.e., IUPAC chemical or common name as listed on the SDS;
- Appropriate hazard warnings or words, pictures, symbols or combination, providing: i. at least general information about chemical's hazards; and, ii.that, in conjunction with the other information immediately available to employees under the Hazcom program, furnish them specific information about the chemical's physical or health hazards; and
- The name and address of the chemical's manufacturer, importer or other responsible party.

The GHS label must list:

- **Product identifier**, i.e., hazardous chemical's name or number;
- **Signal word,** i.e., "danger" for more severe hazards, "warning" for less severe ones;
- **Hazard statement(s),** i.e., statements assigned to a hazard class and category describing the nature of the hazard(s) of a chemical and, where appropriate, the degree of hazard;
- **Pictogram(s)** in the shape of a square set at a point that include a black hazard symbol on a white background with a red frame wide enough to be clearly visible;
- **Precautionary statement(s),** i.e., phrases describing recommended measures to take to minimize or prevent adverse effects of exposure, improper storage or handling; and
- **Name, address & phone number** of manufacturer, importer or other responsible party.

Chemical Safety Dos and Don'ts

- **DO** store chemicals in their original containers
- **DON'T** use chemicals that aren't properly labeled like the one in the photo above
- **DO** follow the label instructions and safe work procedures when working with chemicals
- **DON'T** keep chemicals in lunchrooms or other areas where people eat and drink
- **DO** use the recommended PPE when working with a chemical
- **DON'T** mix chemicals unless you're sure they won't react
- **DO** ask questions if you're not sure about a chemical's dangers or how to work with it safely
- **DON'T** use flammable chemicals near a source of ignition
- **Dos and Don'ts when using chemicals in the workplace**