WHMIS Pictograms



Safety Talk

Staying safe is paramount when working with or near hazardous chemicals. The first step towards safety is recognizing them. To do that, WHMIS 2015 uses pictograms, or representative images, to identify hazards on product labels and safety data sheets.

In this Safety Talk, we'll discuss the two categories of hazards, discover which WHMIS 2015 hazards don't have pictograms, and identify WHMIS 2015 pictograms.

What Can Go Wrong
WHMIS ensures that you receive the correct information about hazardous products and chemicals used or located in your workplace. As product manufacturers and suppliers transition from WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015, you're going to encounter pictograms, labels, and safety data sheets (SDSs) following both standards. Knowing both sets of standards can mean the difference between being safe and risking your life.In WHMIS 2015, there are nine pictograms divided into two categories that you'll need to be able to identify. These categories are physical hazards and health hazards. There are four pictograms in the physical hazards category and five in the health hazards category.

The physical hazards pictograms are:

- Flammable
- Oxidizing
- Compressed gas; and
- Corrosives

The health hazard pictograms are:

- Acutely toxic
- Corrosives
- Irritants
- Health hazards; and
- Biohazardous infectious materials

Did you notice that corrosives are both a physical and a health hazard? While it falls into both categories, the corrosive pictogram represents different types

of damage. Physical corrosives damage metals, whereas health corrosives cause severe damage to eyes and skin.

Additionally, there are hazards covered by WHMIS 2015 which don’t have pictograms. A few of these hazards are:

- combustible dusts
- simple asphyxiants, and
- some less severe hazard categories.

In this Safety Talk, we’ll look at what WHMIS is, what the changes are for WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015, and how these changes are important for you.

How to Protect Yourself
You should be able to identify a hazard by its pictogram. Now, let’s learn more about pictograms, their associated hazard types, and what each means.

FINAL WORD
A pictogram with its distinctive red, diamond shape border is an indicator of the type of hazard you will be working with or near. You should know all nine pictograms and which hazards they represent. Use the information in this Safety Talk to recognize hazardous products and to stay safe.