



## Understanding Compliance with WHMIS Regulation

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is changing. Since 1988, WHMIS has been Canada’s hazard communication system for workplace chemicals. It is a national system implemented through interlocking federal, provincial and territorial legislation and regulations.

WHMIS is changing to adopt new international standards for classifying hazardous chemicals and providing information on labels and safety data sheets. These new international standards are part of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and are being phased in across Canada between February 2015 and December 2018. The GHS standards have been endorsed by the United Nations. They are also being implemented in many other countries including the United States, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan and members of the European Union.

### How will the transition from WHMIS 1988 to WHMIS 2015 take place?

The old requirements are referred to as WHMIS 1988 and the new requirements are referred to as WHMIS 2015. The transition to WHMIS 2015 will take place in 3 phases. The first phase began on February 11, 2015 when the amended federal Hazardous Products Act and new Hazardous Products Regulations came into force. The final phase will end on December 1, 2018 and during this period, WHMIS 1988 will be slowly phased out as follows:

Phase	What happens during this Phase
<p><b>Phase 1</b> February 11, 2015 to May 31, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>suppliers who are chemical manufacturers or importers may sell hazardous products with either the old WHMIS labels and safety data sheets or the new ones</li> <li>employers may receive and use hazardous products with either the old WHMIS labels and safety data sheets or the new ones.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase 2</b> June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>suppliers who are chemical distributors may continue to sell hazardous products with either the old WHMIS labels and safety data sheets or the new ones; and,</li> <li>employers may continue to receive and use hazardous products with either the old WHMIS labels and safety data sheets or the new ones.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phase 3</b> June 1, 2018 to November 30, 2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employers should only be receiving hazardous products with WHMIS 2015 labels and safety data sheets</li> <li>employers will have these final six months of the transition to bring their existing inventories of hazardous products into compliance with WHMIS 2015.</li> </ul>

### Questions?

For more information on the requirements and changes please [click here](#)  
 We welcome your enquiries at ORHMA (905.361.0268 or 800.668.8906) or email at [info@orhma.com](mailto:info@orhma.com)

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