

Guidelines for maintaining electronic copies of SDSs

As an OSHA requirement, all employees have to have unrestricted access to Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) of the chemicals they work with. Printed copies of SDSs are preferred, but electronic storage of these documents is also acceptable, as long as the following guidelines are followed:

- Electronic copies of Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) should be maintained on a local computer present in the lab. Access to this computer should **not be** password protected.
- The electronic copies should be stored on the local hard drive of the computer, not on a network storage location, to be accessible in case the local area network is down.
- Step by step instructions for accessing the electronic copies of SDSs should be clearly posted near the local computer being used.
- A flash drive containing an updated copy of the electronic SDSs should be kept in the lab, to provide easy and portable access to emergency personnel, in case of an emergency. This flash drive should be clearly labeled “Electronic SDSs – chemicals in FRNY ____”.
- The laboratory door posting should clearly indicate the location of the computer used to store SDSs, with exact location of SDSs on computer (e.g.: *PC on bench next to the entrance, C:/SDS-folder/*), and the location of the flash drive used as portable storage (e.g.: *and flash drive in safety binder with CHP*).
- The electronic copies of SDSs should be updated regularly to their latest version, so that they are not older than 5 years.
- All students and researchers working in the lab should be trained on how to access the electronic SDSs in the lab. This training should be given by the Lab Safety Officer, during lab specific safety training, documented and the documentation kept on file with the safety records for the lab.

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