



Are you aware of hazards and safety protections within the hair, nail and beauty industry *and* associated educational training programs?

There are many hazards within the hair, nail and beauty industry that can create health and safety risks for schools and their students via the programs of study offered to ready students for careers within the industry. If you provide educational programs for students or services to the public within this discipline area you must ensure that the health and safety of your staff, students and any public clients is taken seriously, evaluated and any areas needing attention are addressed. Staff and students participating in these programs may be exposed to a wide range of products containing hazardous substances, including:

- hair dyes
- permanent wave solutions
- hair styling agents
- hair straighteners ([click here for recent hazard alert on Formaldehyde by Oregon OSHA](#))
- brow and lash tints
- peroxides
- disinfectants and cleaning products
- bleaches
- shampoos
- nail and skin care products
- chemical peels
- wax solvents

The likelihood of a hazardous substance causing health effects depends on a number of factors, including the toxicity of the substance, the amount of substance that staff and students are exposed to, the frequency and duration of their exposure and how staff and students are exposed (e.g. skin absorption, inhalation, or ingestion). Staff and students can determine whether a product contains a hazardous substance by reading its label and material safety data sheet (MSDS).

You can prevent or minimize exposure to hazards by taking a few simple precautions including developing and following a comprehensive (OSHA required) Chemical Hazard Communication/Hygiene Program. In addition, following a risk management process can help you prevent or minimize risks arising from hazards associated with this field of study. By following the steps detailed below schools should be better able to provide for a more conscious and deliberate approach to managing the risk associated with educational offerings in the hair, nail and beauty industry.

The five steps of risk management are:

- First - Identify hazards
- Second - Assess risks that may result because of the hazards
- Third - Decide on control measures
- Fourth - Implement control measures
- Fifth - Monitor and review the effectiveness of control measures

Once hazards have been identified and the risks assessed, ask the following: Can we completely remove the hazard from our program of study? Can we do without using this substance? Is there a safer alternative available?

The following sample control measures are offered to assist you in managing your exposure to any hazards associated with the products and services within these educational programs. In many cases, it will be necessary to use more than one control measure.

Substitution - Reduce a risk by substituting a less hazardous process, or product for the ones currently used. Health information found in an MSDS or on a product label may assist in the selection of a less hazardous substance or process.

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Redesign - Change the design of the classroom/salon, equipment or work process, e.g. rearrange equipment and work stations to be sure there is good ventilation so that exposure to airborne contaminants can be prevented or minimized. It is important to note that natural ventilation generally does not provide sufficient airflow to be suitable for use as a method for controlling exposure to airborne contaminants, such as chemical vapors, mists and dusts in hairdressing, nail and beauty salons. Having adequate local exhaust ventilation is an excellent risk management redesign for those areas where ventilation is inadequate or non-existent and is a more reliable means for removing airborne contaminants at the source, before they can be breathed in. Care must be taken to ensure the system draws contaminated air away from, rather than past a person's nose and mouth.

Questions to ask when evaluating the adequacy of ventilation within your classroom/lab/salon areas include:

- Do strong odors linger for more than 10 minutes?
- Can strong odors be detected from the other side of the room or other parts of the building?
- Are product odors still present when you open the classroom/salon in the morning?
- Is there visible evidence of excessive humidity as moisture on surfaces, or do the windows become foggy within the classroom/lab?
- Do staff, students and/or visitors complain of offensive odors?
- Are odors ever strong enough to cause students/staff to open the window or door to ventilate the area?

If you answered yes to one or more of the above questions, the ventilation within your classroom environment may need evaluation and improvement.

Safety Education - Use procedures and instruction to prevent or minimize risk, e.g. safety guidelines, warning signs, green and/or least toxic purchasing policies, classroom practices to reduce frequency of exposure, supervision, safety and health instruction and training, good maintenance and housekeeping.

MSDS - Having all MSDS records accessible for products used is an important component of your Chemical Hazard Communication/Hygiene Program. An MSDS provides information about product ingredients, potential health effects, safe use, first aid and storage of the hazardous substance.

Labels - Each product container of a hazardous substance must have a label attached to it. The label at minimum must state the product name, risk and any safety phrases. The label may also state the ingredient's chemical name. If a hazardous substance is transferred from one container into a second container, and the substance is not entirely used immediately, you must ensure that the second container is properly labeled.

Additional Administrative Controls -

- Store chemicals away from energy sources, such as fuse boxes, naked flames, heat and intense light sources.
- Store flammable chemicals in a cool place in a securely locked fireproof cabinet.
- Make sure products and chemicals are not readily accessible to students without adult supervision.
- Refer to the MSDS to make sure appropriate procedures are in place for the clean up of spills using a suitable absorbent material.
- Clean up chemical spills promptly.
- Make sure that spilled chemicals and equipment used for chemical clean up are disposed of appropriately.
- Purchase chemicals in ready-to-use packages rather than transferring from large containers.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke in areas that contain chemicals.
- Wash hands with a pH neutral soap or barrier cream before eating, drinking or smoking.

Personal protective equipment -

- Provide gloves, glasses, aprons as required/recommended in the MSDS or on the product label.
- Provide students and staff with training on the fit, maintenance and use of personal protective equipment.
- Make sure students and staff use appropriate barrier creams on exposed skin areas if products cause any skin irritations.
- Make sure students and staff members are directed to cover any cuts or broken skin with a waterproof dressing.
- Make sure staff and students use any eye protection that the label and/or MSDS might recommend.

For additional guidance on safety within the cosmetology industry and educational programs check the federal OSHA www.osha.gov website, your State's Departments of Labor and Health, and/or your State Education Department.

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