

SHIPPING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Across this nation, on the high seas and in the air, shipping hazardous material is done thousands of times each day. You may not be in the business of making or producing hazardous material but **you may nevertheless be moving hazardous materials every day!**

What is a hazardous material? A hazardous material is any item or agent (biological, chemical, physical) which has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment, either by itself or through interaction with other factors.

A single can of paint, a tube of lubricant, a bottle of thinner, extra batteries, even magnets may transform your shipment into a hazardous shipment. The law compels shippers to meet their training and awareness responsibilities even if you have moved only one hazardous shipment during an entire year.

Each person who offers hazardous materials (sometimes called dangerous goods) for transportation must properly classify, package, mark, label, placard and document that shipment. All persons coming in contact with and directly affecting the safe transportation of the shipment must also be trained. The level of their training depends on their involvement in the shipment. *Even the secretary who types up the documents must be hazardous material awareness trained!*

Hazardous words. Any of the following words used in casual conversation, of documents, or their physical presence is a tip-off of a possible hazardous shipment. The touch up paint or the extra tube of lubricant may transform a machinery shipment into hazardous cargo. Computers usually have batteries and sometimes un-interruptible power supplies, ordinary laundry supplies might contain bleaches, a tool chest may contain explosive cartridges for power nailers or partially used aerosol cans, perhaps even solvents or thinners. Frozen articles may contain dry ice. Gas cylinders attached to machinery may present a hazardous condition. A casual request for a Material Safety Data Sheet is a clear warning that you have a potential hazardous shipment. The table below is a list of other words and phrases that prevent you from shipping a dangerous hazardous shipment not properly prepared and documented.

Household Goods	Vaccines	Passenger Baggage	Oxygen
Toxic	Power Supplies	Batteries	Pressurized
Fuel Tanks	Gas Lines	Gas cylinders	Liquefied gas
LP	Thinners	Gas tank	Cylinders
Acid Resins	Solvents	Lubricants	Mercury
Fertilizer	Adhesives	Corrosive	Radioactive
Aerosols	Poison	Paint	Inflators
Lighters	MSDS	Spray paint	Infectious

Why should you comply? Aside from the obvious, keeping your fellow workers, your partners and your customers safe, it is also very, very illegal. In brief, the fines can reach \$27,500 for violations of any hazardous materials regulations including training. In serious cases, a criminal penalty of up to \$500,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 5 years. Fines as large as these could pay for a lot of touch-up paint. U.S. has a excellent web site at <http://hazmat.dot.gov/>