



## SCHC Fall Conference Focuses on GHS

By Ruth Mayo, Regulatory Compliance Specialist  
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Having been to the last three SCHC (Society for Chemical Hazard Communication) meetings I knew this year's fall meeting would be another beneficial, highly educational experience and I was not disappointed. The SCHC meeting which took place in Arlington, VA focused primarily on the GHS (Globally Harmonized System). Two of the topics covered were: changes to the GHS and where in the process of GHS implementation we stand from a global perspective.

The GHS itself has gone through some revisions since its last publication in 2005. The new 2007 GHS publication is available for purchase in hardcopy format from the UNECE website. Changes to the '05 version include, but are not limited to, explanatory clarifications concerning the purpose, scope, and application of the GHS; addition of Hazard Statement and Precautionary Measure Codes; and changes to the definitions and/or criteria for classification of explosives, gases under pressure, oxidizing solids, corrosive to metals, acute toxicity, skin corrosion/irritation, respiratory and skin sensitization, and carcinogenicity.

The committee of country and agency representatives at the SCHC conference reiterated what we all have been hearing for the past several months, that GHS is coming - and it is coming faster in the European and the Asian-Pacific countries than it is here in the States. While the United States and Canada are further behind some countries, they are still

working towards integrating GHS into their current regulative standards. Listed below are current events related to the GHS of some of the major players globally.

- Japan has already implemented the GHS. They have classified at least 700 of their ISHL (Industrial Safety and Health Law) regulated chemicals for GHS and are currently working on translating those into English.
- Korea has also adopted GHS and will be enforcing the new GHS classification and labeling regulations by July 1 of 2008.
- New Zealand adopted GHS in 2001. The date for compliance is July 1, 2008 for labeling, Safety Data Sheets, and packaging. Recognizing they are ahead of most other countries, they have implemented a "2010 Provision" which will allow for acceptance of labeling in accordance with the requirements of specified overseas jurisdictions until the end of 2010.
- Europe is moving forward as well with the implementation of GHS. On June 27, 2007 the European Commission adopted the proposed act that aligns the EU system with the GHS. The REACH regulation was also entered into force earlier this summer on June 1, 2007 which will integrate the EU-GHS method for classification once it has been fully adopted and do away with the current pure substance and mixture Directives. The transition time for EU-GHS classifications and labeling would be 3 years for substances,

December 2010, and 5 years for mixtures, June 1, 2015. Until those dates, substances and mixtures that have been classified and placed on the market will not be required to be labeled and packaged in accordance with the new EU-GHS regulation.

- Canada is currently performing a situational analysis for each sector and their respective preferred building blocks. They may decide to revisit their recommendations as the US considers GHS implementation and as they work with the US and Mexico on a NAFTA approach.
- The United States published their Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule-Making on September 12, 2006 and received several hundred comments. They are currently undertaking an economic peer-review, assessing the impacts of GHS integration. Once the economic review is completed and analyzed they will be publishing the new ANPR. The review is taking longer than anticipated, which may ultimately push back the publication of the ANPR originally thought to be available sometime in 2008. The representative from OSHA would not comment on how long the transition time would be to move from the current HCS to the new US-GHS once it has been adopted.

It is clear things are progressing forward, and SiteHawk is dedicated to keeping you informed as we learn of the new advancements. Additionally, as countries begin to finalize rules and set things more firmly in motion, we will be doing all we can to ensure our software will have the tools necessary to assist you in your transition.

For more information on the status of country GHS implementation please visit the UNECE website or visit the SCHC website to view committee speaker presentations regarding GHS implementation. Also, to ensure you remain current, visit [www.ghsinformation.com](http://www.ghsinformation.com) and sign up for the GHS Newsletter while you are there.

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