Administrative Procedure **3041 MR5**

WHMIS and Hazardous Materials

1. **Preamble**

1.1 In order to protect staff and students from the risks associated with hazardous materials, the district will identify all potentially hazardous materials in accordance with Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) regulations. A general description of WHMIS regulations are included in Appendix "A" to this regulation.

1.2 Standards and procedures for the safe handling, storage, and use of hazardous materials will be developed and applied where needed.

2. **Material Safety Data Sheets**

2.1 A material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) must be available on site for each hazardous material kept at that site.

2.2 All MSDS's for each site shall be kept at the central Safety Information Station. Sites which incorporate areas such as science labs or shops that contain large stores of materials may have additional Safety Information Stations containing the MSDS's for those areas.

2.3 A central MSDS file for the district will be maintained by the Health & Safety Officer.

3. **WHMIS Requirements**

3.1 The administrator or supervisor responsible for a site will ensure that:

(a) an inventory of all hazardous materials used at that site is developed and maintained;

(b) an MSDS is kept on site for each hazardous material;

(c) each container of hazardous materials is properly labelled;

(d) an MSDS is obtained for every hazardous material that is purchased'

(e) all staff at each site receive WHMIS training.

4. **Purchasing**

4.1 Each hazardous or potentially hazardous material purchased must be preceded or accompanied by an appropriate MSDS. This requirement is stipulated on the district's purchase order form. It is the responsibility of the person placing the order to ensure that an MSDS is received and that a copy of the MSDS is forwarded to the Health and Safety Officer.

5. **Labelling**

5.1 All containers of hazardous materials must be labelled as to their contents. All containers received from suppliers must have a supplier label. If a container does not have a supplier label, it should either be returned to the supplier or stored until a proper label is received.

5.2 Any container filled on site must be labelled or otherwise identified by the person handling the material. Workplace labels may be obtained from the Health and Safety Officer.

6. **Materials Inventory**

6.1 It is the responsibility of each site administrator or supervisor to ensure that an initial inventory of the hazardous materials used at their site is compiled. The inventory must include all hazardous or potentially hazardous materials kept on the site and must specify the following:

(a) product name or description;

(b) location stored;

(c) location used;

(d) name and address of manufacturer or supplier;

(e) whether or not an MSDS is available and, if so, its expiration date.

6.2 This information shall be forwarded to the Health and Safety Officer so that a district inventory may be established and MSDS's may be obtained where needed.

6.3 Follow-up inventories will be conducted annually by the Health and Safety Officer to identify new materials and materials which are no longer being used.

7. Education and Orientation

7.1 All district employees, upon commencing employment or as soon as practicable thereafter, shall receive orientation in general WHMIS requirements and responsibilities. All employees shall receive site-specific orientation in the properties and handling of hazardous materials used or stored at the site at which they work. Employees exposed to hazardous materials through the course of their jobs will receive specific orientation related to those materials. This may include, but is not limited to, PCB's, asbestos, and potentially infectious materials.

7.2 The Health and Safety Officer will review the district's education and orientation program annually and will develop and provide WHMIS orientation programs as required.

7.3 It is the responsibility of each employee's supervisor or manager to ensure that the employee receives the required safety education and orientation.

8. Storage and Handling of Hazardous Materials

8.1 Hazardous materials shall be stored and handled in accordance with the requirements of the Industrial Health and Safety Regulations and the Fire Code.

8.2 Hazardous materials shall be stored only in unoccupied areas that are well ventilated. Under no circumstances are such materials to be stored in electrical, mechanical, or furnace rooms.

8.3 Materials which are incompatible or which produce violent reactions when combined shall not be stored in proximity to one another.

8.4 Containers of hazardous materials stored on shelves shall be secured or restrained to prevent them from falling.

8.5 Flammable liquids stored indoors shall be kept only in closed containers and stored in storage cabinets designed for flammable liquids.

8.6 Only working quantities of hazardous materials shall be kept outside storage areas.

8.7 Containers for hazardous materials must be inert to their contents and securely sealed.

8.8 Laboratory fume hoods are not to be used for the storage of chemicals.

8.9 Cylinders of compressed gas shall be stored in such a manner that they are secure from falling.

8.10 Emergency eyewash stations shall be maintained in all areas where hazardous materials are handled or used.

8.11 Suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be worn when working with or handling hazardous materials.

8.12 Eating and drinking are not permitted in areas where hazardous materials are stored, handled, or used.

9. Emergency Procedures - Hazardous Materials

9.1 *Containing Hazardous Material Spills*

9.1.1 Methods for dealing with spills of hazardous materials will vary widely depending on the characteristics of the material spilled or released. The MSDS shall be consulted for information on how to deal with any particular substance. In every event the primary concern is the safety of the person handling the material and any other persons in the vicinity. If the spill presents any sort of hazard, the area must be evacuated until the spill is properly dealt with.

9.2 *First Aid*

9.2.1 Injuries involving hazardous materials involve either inhalation, skin contact, or ingestion of the material. The following actions are recommended in each case:

(a) Inhalation. Get the victim to fresh air and administer oxygen, if available. Seek medical aid.

(b) Skin contact. Immediately wash the area of contact with copious amounts of water. Remove any contaminated clothing.

(c) Ingestion. Do not induce vomiting. Seek medical aid.

9.2.2 In each case consult the MSDS for further information and, if necessary, seek further aid from the following agencies:

Poison Control 1-800-567-8911
Ambulance 338-7471

9.3 *Reporting Hazardous Material Spills*

9.3.1 Any incident involving a chemical spill or release of a hazardous material shall be reported to the appropriate supervisor as soon as possible after occurrence. Any spill of 25 litres (5 gallons) or more of any hazardous material must be reported to the Health and Safety Officer immediately.

9.4 *Hazardous Materials Fires*

9.4.1 In the event of a fire involving hazardous materials, regardless of whether or not the materials are the source of the fire, the following actions must be taken in the order of priority listed:

(a) Ensure personal safety. At all times ensure that you have a clear route of escape. If at any time there is any risk to your personal safety, leave the area immediately.

(b) Activate the fire alarm. This action must not be delayed any longer than is absolutely necessary in order to ensure your personal safety.

(c) Warn other people in the area. Notify anyone working in your vicinity who is or may be affected by the fire.

(d) Attempt to extinguish the fire. If you have received training in extinguishing minor fires and if you feel that you can safely deal with the fire, attempt to extinguish it with a fire extinguisher.

NO STAFF MEMBER SHALL PUT THEMSELVES AT RISK IN ORDER TO EXTINGUISH A FIRE.

(e) Contain the fire. If you cannot extinguish the fire, contain it by closing the doors of the room in which the fire is located.

9.5 *Gas Leaks*

9.5.1 A natural gas or propane leak will be quickly noted by the distinctive smell. In the event of a known or suspected leak, immediately notify the following:

Fire Department.....338-6522
Maintenance Department.....338-7475
Gas Emergencies 338-9997
School Board Office.....338-5500

9.5.2 Evacuation of the area or building may be initiated at the discretion of the administrator, supervisor, or designate.

9.5.3 Staff and students are to be evacuated up wind and/or to the point that there is no discernible smell.

9.5.4 Do not attempt to repair gas equipment yourself and, other than in the event of an earthquake, do not attempt to turn off a gas supply line to a building. In the event of a gas leak in the science area of a school, the local shutoff valve may be utilized.

10. **Contact Lenses**

10.1 No staff member shall wear contact lenses while working with any material which produces hazardous dusts, gases, mists, or vapours. Any staff member who wears contact lenses to work must notify their supervisor that they are doing so.

11. **Asbestos**

11.1 Only district maintenance staff and contractors who have been properly trained may work with or near materials containing friable asbestos or work with manufactured products containing asbestos. All such work must be performed in accordance with the district's procedures for working with asbestos, and must have the written authorization of the Director of Maintenance and Operations.

12. **PCB's**

12.1 Fluorescent light ballasts which contain or may contain PCB's shall only be removed or installed by properly trained electricians.

12.2 Used ballasts which may contain PCB's shall be handled only by maintenance staff who are properly trained and shall be stored only in the district's PCB storage shed. All handling and storage of ballasts containing PCB's shall be in accordance with the district's procedures for working with PCB's.

13. **Potentially Infectious Materials**

13.1 Any bodily fluids or wastes such as blood, vomit, urine, faeces, or saliva are potential sources of infection. Such materials shall be handled only by staff members who have received proper training and only in accordance with the district's procedures for working with potentially infectious materials.

APPENDIX "A"

WHMIS

1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) is a regulatory system designed to prevent injury and illness caused by workplace exposure to hazardous materials. In practice it is basically a right-to-know system intended to inform workers about the hazards of the materials they encounter in the course of their jobs. There are three aspects to this system:

(a) standardized labelling for containers of hazardous materials;

(b) standardized, mandatory Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's) for all hazardous materials;

(c) mandatory education in the hazards of materials and their safe handling.

1.2 WHMIS does not apply to all materials that might be found in the workplace. Some are fully or partially exempt from labelling or MSDS requirements. These materials include:

- consumer products
- cosmetics and drugs
- hazardous wastes
- pesticides and herbicides
- radioactive materials.

2. **Labelling and Identification**

2.1 *Supplier Labels*

2.1.1 The supplier has the initial responsibility for labelling containers of hazardous materials when they are shipped. This might involve labelling a single container, a crate of containers, or a bulk shipment.

2.1.2 The supplier label may contain four, five, or seven categories of information, depending on the size of the container and whether or not it is intended for use in a laboratory.

2.1.3 Although the supplier has the responsibility for providing labels, the district is responsible for ensuring that all materials received into the workplace are properly labelled.

2.2 *Workplace Labels*

2.2.1 A workplace label is required under certain circumstances when a hazardous material is transferred from its original container into a different container and when a new material is produced in the workplace, including materials exempt from WHMIS regulations.

2.2.2 A workplace label must display at least two types of information: a product identifier and precautionary instructions for use of the product. If an MSDS is available for the product, a statement to that effect must appear on the label.

2.3 *Workplace Identifiers*

2.3.1 In some cases a workplace label is impractical or unnecessary; for example:

- containers of hazardous wastes
- products contained in piping systems
- a product which is transferred into a container for use during one shift and which will be used only by the employee who transferred it
- a product which is transferred into a container for use only in a laboratory
- materials which are undergoing laboratory analysis

2.3.2 In these cases alternative means of identifying the materials may be used. These might include colour coding, a numbering system, or a unique type of container. Whatever type of identification system is used, it must be backed up by training to ensure that everyone using it understands what it means.

2.4 *No Labels*

2.4.1 In some circumstances any type of labelling or identification system is impractical and unnecessary; for instance, when a container is filled with a hazardous product and then immediately emptied. In this case the container is under the control of one person and no other person will come in contact with it while it is filled.

3. Material Safety Data Sheets

3.1 *Definition*

3.1.1 A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is a document which gives detailed technical information about a product or material. The information is intended to provide the knowledge necessary for the safe handling, storage, and use of that product.

3.1.2 WHMIS, as a system of information availability, relies on and regulates MSDS's. It relies on them as a source of materials information and as a training resource. It regulates their content and availability.

3.2 *Responsibilities of Suppliers*

3.2.1 Suppliers of hazardous goods are responsible for either developing or obtaining MSDS's for the goods they supply. They are required to send an MSDS for each material sold or sent to a customer, either prior to or accompanying the shipment. There are some exemptions to this requirement:

- foods, drugs, and cosmetics
- pesticides
- radioactive materials
- consumer products
- laboratory samples
- laboratory supplies of less than 10 kg which have labels that contain all of the information required on an MSDS

3.2.2 Suppliers are required to ensure that their MSDS's are current to within three years and that the MSDS's contain certain mandatory categories of information. MSDS's must clearly state if any of the required information is not applicable or available.

3.3 *Responsibilities of Employers*

3.3.1 An employer must ensure that an appropriate MSDS is received from a supplier for any hazardous goods which are received. Although MSDS's are not required for the exempted materials mentioned above, it is good practice to try to obtain one or, if this is not possible, develop one in-house.

3.3.2 The employer is further required to ensure that all MSDS's received are current to within three years and contain all of the required categories of information. If an MSDS does not meet all requirements, the employer is required to take steps to obtain a proper MSDS from the supplier.

3.3.3 The employer must ensure that proper MSDS's are readily available to employees for every hazardous material those employees handle.

4. Education and Orientation

4.1 *General Orientation*

4.1.1 This consists of general information about the purpose and components of WHMIS. It is required for all employees and includes the following required elements:

(a) how WHMIS works;

(b) how to read and understand MSDS's and container labels;

(c) employee rights under WHMIS;

(d) employee responsibilities under WHMIS.

4.1.2 The video "Introduction to WHMIS" and the hand-out "What's WHMIS?" are intended to provide this basic information. Each administrator or supervisor shall ensure that all of their employees view and understand the video and read the hand-out.

4.2 *Site-Specific Orientation*

4.2.1 In addition to general education in WHMIS, each site using hazardous materials is required to provide general orientation relevant to those materials. This would include:

(a) the location of the site MSDS file;

(b) workplace identifiers used instead of labels at that site;

(c) emergency procedures for releases or spills of hazardous materials.

4.3 *Job-Specific Training*

4.3.1 Each employee who handles or works in proximity to a hazardous material must be trained in its safe handling and use to a level consistent with their level of risk or exposure. This will include:

(a) the hazards associated with the material;

(b) procedures for safe storage, handling, use, and disposal of the material.

4.3.2 The manner in which this goal is achieved will vary from employee to employee and from site to site. An employee who works in proximity to a material would not require the same level of training as an employee who actually handles the material.

4.4 *Documentation*

4.4.1 All training and education, on every level, must be documented by completion of an orientation checklist which is signed by the employee and their supervisor or trainer and which is placed on the employee's personal file.

4.5 *Review*

4.5.1 The district's education and orientation program will be reviewed annually by the Health and Safety Officer.