HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL LABELLING

Labels contain information on the identity and proportions of the hazardous chemical and its constituents or ingredients. They also contain information on the hazards of the chemical, precautions to be followed during its use, handling and storage, and instructions for the safe disposal of the chemical. You should always read and understand the information on a label before using a hazardous chemical.

Labelling Decanted or Research Chemicals

While containers originating from a supplier or manufacturer will already be labelled, correct labelling is also required if the chemical is manufactured in the University or decanted or transferred from the chemical's original container in the workplace. All University staff and students have the ability to print compliant chemical labels via the Chemwatch GoldFFX system which can be accessed via the staff or student portal. Different size labels can be easily generated and printed to suit the size and shape of the chemical container.

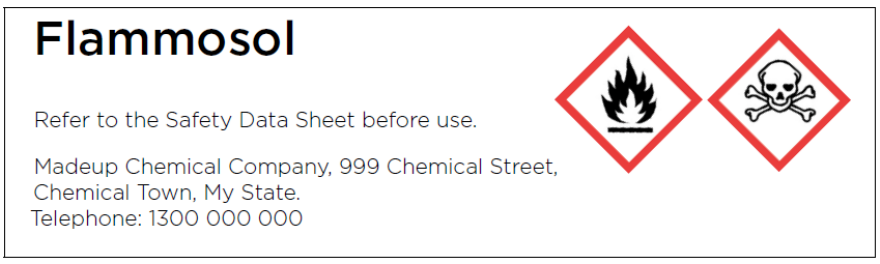
The amount of information included on the label of a decanted or manufactured chemical container will vary and be dependent on the size and shape of the container. Labels for small containers or packages must include as much labelling information as reasonably practicable. All labels are to be durable so as to remain legible and firmly attached to the container taking into account possible damage by moisture or chemicals.

Decanted Chemical Labels

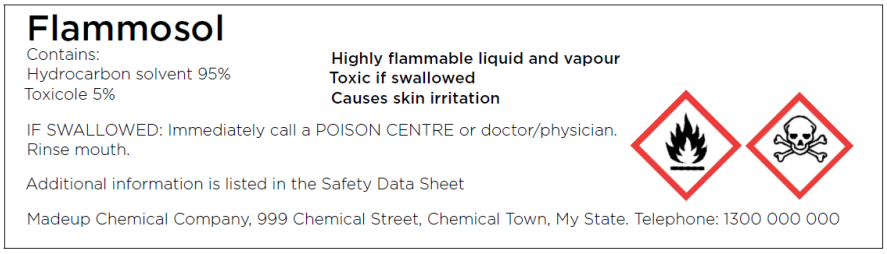
If a hazardous chemical has been decanted or transferred from the container in which it was packed and it will not be used immediately, the label must, at a minimum, be written in English and include the product identifier, manufacturer or importer information, and a hazard pictogram or hazard statement consistent with the correct classification of the chemical.

Example label for decanted chemicals

a) This example contains the minimum labelling information permitted and a reference to the safety data sheet. [N.B. Flammosol is a hypothetical hazardous mixture.]



b) This example label has sufficient room to include additional labelling information, including hazard statements, the identity and proportions of the hazardous ingredients, critical first aid instructions and reference to the safety data sheet.

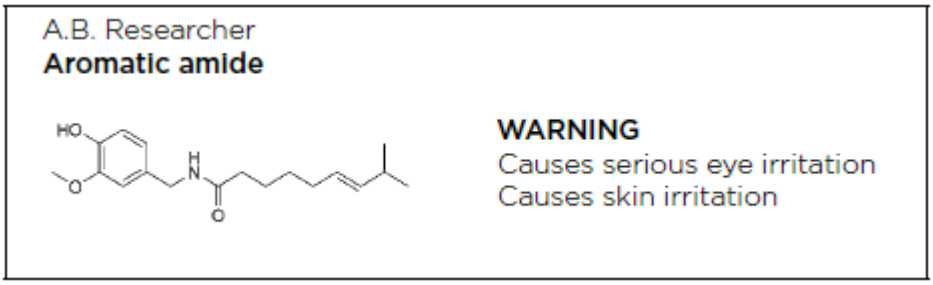


Research (Manufactured) Chemical Labels

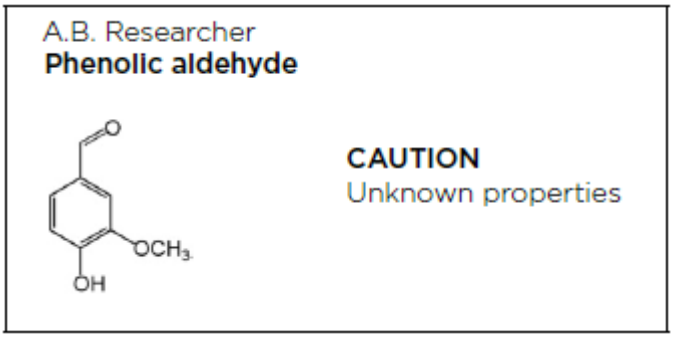
For a substance or mixture that has been manufactured in the University, the label must, at a minimum, be written in English and include the product identifier (chemical name or abbreviation/acronym or chemical formula) and a hazard pictogram or hazard statement.

Example labels for research chemicals or samples for analysis

a) In this example, the chemical identity and some of the hazardous properties are known, and are therefore, included on the label.



b) In this example, the identity of the chemical is known. However, the hazardous properties have not been determined.



c) In the following example, neither the identity nor the hazardous properties of the substance are known.

Where labelling the actual laboratory container is impractical due to its size or the conditions under which it is used, other methods of providing the information can be used, for example a secure swing tag, a sign attached to supporting apparatus or labelling an outer container. For example, for a rack of test tubes, rather than label each individual test tube containing the same hazardous chemical, you may attach a label to the rack using a swing tag.

References

Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals Code of Practice 2015

Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)

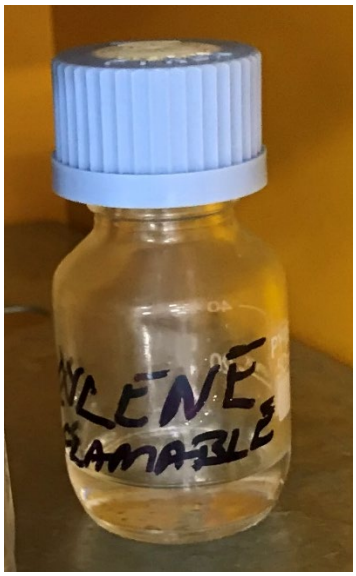
Safe Management of Chemicals Procedure

Examples of Non-Compliant Labels

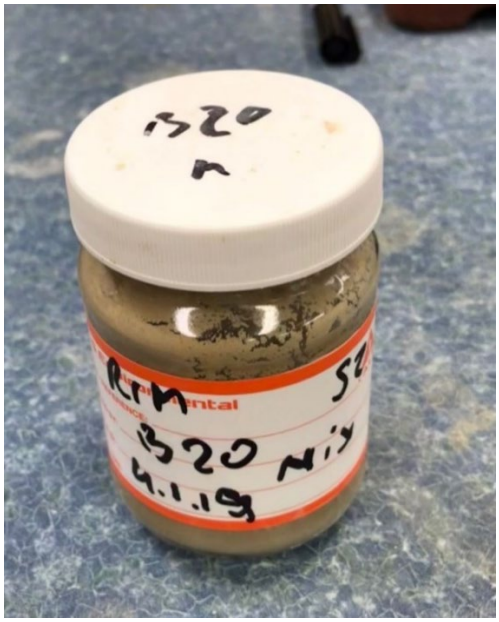
Below are some examples of containers incorrectly labelled or stored in inappropriate containers.

a) In this example, an old food container is used to store an unidentified substance. Food containers must not be used for storing chemicals.

b) In this example, a flammable chemical, xylene, has a hand-written chemical name. However, the label does not contain the minimum labelling information (i.e. pictogram and manufacturer).



c) In this example, a research sample (possibly where the hazardous properties of the substance are unknown) has an identifier code, but not state 'Caution: Unknown Properties'.



d) In this example, a container has multiple hand written identifiers (some partially legible), indicating the contents is possibly a diluted chemical mixture. However, the label does not contain the minimum labelling information.