

Using Chemicals in Cornell Plant Growth Facilities

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandates that all chemicals used in the workplace be properly labeled. Chemicals used in plant growth facilities or other non-laboratory areas are required to have more detailed label information than the same materials used in a laboratory setting, as non-lab workers cannot be assumed to have extensive chemical safety knowledge. This sheet summarizes policy for using and labeling chemicals in the Cornell Plant Growth Facilities.

Please visit the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CAL S) Occupational and Environmental Health (OE H) web site greenhouse page “Greenhouse Resources” (<http://greenhouses.cals.cornell.edu>) for the Cornell greenhouse use policies or contact the plant growth facilities manager for additional information.

What must plant growth facilities users do?

- Contact the plant growth facilities supervisor or manager BEFORE bringing any chemicals into the plant growth facility or associated non-laboratory areas such as growth chambers, headhouses, hallways and storage cabinets.
- Work with the plant growth facilities supervisor or manager to determine where Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) and inventory records are to be kept.
- Comply with the requirements listed below, as summarized from the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard.

What materials are covered?

All containers in the workplace must be properly labeled. This includes: pesticides, laboratory chemicals, fertilizers, growth regulators, rooting hormones, cleaning products, lubricants, etc. Water containers should be labeled “water” to avoid confusion with other solutions. “Empty” containers – deface the label and dispose of properly. [Guidance on empty containers](#) can be found on the EHS website here: (<https://ehs.cornell.edu/research-safety/chemical-safety/laboratory-safety-manual/chapter-7-safe-chemical-use/78-chemical>)

What is required to be on the label?

- Owner’s name and telephone number
- Full name of Chemical (no abbreviations, symbols, or structures)
- A harmonized signal word approved GHS pictogram
- Hazard statement for each hazard class/category
- A precautionary statement
- Supplier identification

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Where can labels be found?

Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) compliant labels can be printed from *Chemwatch* found on the Cornell Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) web site. Follow these steps:

- Login to [Chemwatch](https://ehs.cornell.edu/research-safety/chemical-safety/safety-data-sheets-chemwatch) (<https://ehs.cornell.edu/research-safety/chemical-safety/safety-data-sheets-chemwatch>)
- Enter name of chemical in top-left box
- Click on “Labels” in middle-left box
- Click “Search” in top-left box
- Choose the chemical from the list that populates
- Choose the size/shape label you want, hover over it and click on the arrow that appears on the bottom right.

What else is required to comply with the Hazard Communication Standard?

- SDSs must be readily accessible to all employees in the event of an emergency.
- A current inventory of chemicals must be kept at the facility where they are used.
- All chemical bottles must be properly labeled and in compliance with Global Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) standards.

Want to learn more about chemical labeling?

Cornell EHS offers a [“Chemical Labeling Toolbox Talk”](#) search the EHS web site at <https://ehs.cornell.edu/>