

# Section 14

## HAZARD COMMUNICATIONS (HAZCOM)

### 14.1 Working With Chemicals

The OSHA Hazard Communication (HAZCOM) (Right-To-Know) Standard requires all employees be given adequate information and training on the long- and short-term health effects of chemicals they work with. Your company has established a Hazard Communication (HAZCOM) Program to provide this information to you. You can take the steps necessary to safeguard your health by following the procedures established in this program.

A copy of this program – along with a chemical inventory list and corresponding Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) are available for your review and is required to be kept at your local office and at all construction and major modernization jobsites or any other sites where you spend a full shift or eight hours. This program may be made available to others upon request to your Superintendent/Manager.

Chemicals affect the human body differently. The physical makeup of the chemical, the amount of exposure (time and quantity), and the manner in which the chemical is absorbed by the body all play a role in the resulting effects. As long as exposures are not excessive, many potentially dangerous substances are eliminated naturally from the body. It is important to remember that most materials can be removed this way, and their effects are usually not cumulative.

What is important is the dose or amount of a particular chemical that is absorbed over a period of time. Too much of a chemical, either all at once or over time, may be dangerous. Chemicals are absorbed into the body in three ways: