



Failing to address workplace chemicals in their business safety plan was **the third most cited infraction in 2021** by L&I's DOSH. Their citations don't involve window cleaners, dish soaps, or other common cleaners. The concerning chemicals in the workplace are typically ones that aren't sold off a grocery store shelf, although bleach or ammonia would be the exceptions.

Thousands of chemicals are used in typical commercial products, such as industrial-grade cleaners, epoxies, solvents, and glues.

Employers must develop a Hazard Communication Plan (HazCom) to protect their employees.

HazCom rules were developed to ensure employers provide information about inherently hazardous chemicals to their employees.

HazCom rules apply if your company:

- Has employees with potential exposure to hazardous chemicals at work, including usage of bleach and ammonia
- Distributes hazardous chemicals to other employers
- Manufactures (produces) or imports hazardous chemicals

A HazCom plan is a business location-specific policy that specifies how employees must handle each of the chemicals they work with regularly.

The plan needs to be periodically reviewed for changes in business operations, training programs, and chemical records. The HazCom plan is part of an Accident Prevention Program.

Manufacturer-provided **Safety Data Sheets** contain specific facts and warnings for each chemical.

L&I states that **it is acceptable to maintain electronic versions of safety data sheets** rather than printed copies in binders. Regardless of format, they must be easily accessible to all employees at the workplace. Communicate with chemical suppliers to ensure current versions are on file. If Safety Data Sheets are provided through a subscription service, it is important to verify that the business' current documentation 'library' is current.

A general HazCom template can be found [here](#). This template can be modified to fit specific company needs and processes.

