



CITY OF MADISON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Guidelines for compliance with Hazardous Materials Facility Identification Signs. (MGO 34, NFPA 704 and IFC Chapter 50)

Requirements

Madison General Ordinances (MGO) Chapter 34 Fire Prevention Code adopts the International Fire Code (IFC). IFC Chapter 50 Hazardous Materials – General Provisions, IFC 105.5.22 and Madison General Ordinance 34.5003 define what hazardous materials are regulated, adopts safety standards, requires a permit to use, store or handle hazardous materials and requires NFPA 704 signs to identify facilities with hazardous materials.

Intent of NFPA 704

NFPA 704 provides a simple, readily recognized, easily understood system of markings that provides emergency responders with a general idea of the hazards present in a general location. The basic categories of hazards addressed by NFPA 704 include health, flammability, reactivity and other related hazards. This system increases life safety for both public and private emergency response personnel. 704 signs provide basic information, which assists in planning for effective fire and emergency control operations, including environmental safety.

The NFPA 704 standard is available for purchase through the National Fire Protection Association at 1-800-344-3555 or www.nfpa.org.

Identifying Hazardous Materials

A hazardous material is any material or combination of materials, which may cause or significantly contribute to an increase in serious irreversible illness or an incapacitating illness. A material, which is hazardous, may also pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment because of its quantity, concentration or physical, chemical or infectious characteristics. The term “hazardous materials” includes but is not limited to, products that are explosive, toxic, corrosive, flammable, irritants, strong sensitizers or a biological hazard.

Where and When to Use Signs

The identification sign shall be required on buildings, storage trailers, stationary tanks, areas and rooms of buildings for quantities of hazardous materials exceeding the amounts specified in IFC Table 105.5.22.

The following are exempt from the sign requirements:

1. Retail trade facilities unless an unusual hazard is present.
2. Doors directly to laboratories require a sign specified in MGO 34.5003 Table A.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

Material Safety Data Sheets shall be required for all materials, which are stored, used or handled in amounts exceeding the quantities listed in the IFC table 105.5.22. MSDS are a source of the information needed to accurately complete 704 signs.

Sign Requirements

Building Identification:

A 704 sign at least 2-½ inches square, with no numbers, shall be conspicuously placed on or near all of the exterior building exit doors to identify the building to the Fire Department as a labeled building.

A sign at least 7-½ inches square with the required identification numbers indicating the highest number of the most hazardous material for each hazard shall be conspicuously placed on or near the exterior door closest to the hazardous material(s).

Room Identification:

Doors that directly access a room or area that contains a hazardous material shall be identified with a numbered sign at least 7-½ inches square.

In any room or area that has more than one hazardous material, the sign shall list the highest number of the most hazardous material for each hazard (ex. health, fire, reactivity, etc.). The sign shall be placed on the door or as directed by the Chief.

Tank Identification:

A sign at least 7-½ inches square with the required identification numbers shall be placed on each individual tank in such a manner so that the sign is clearly visible on two sides.

Sign Availability:

The Madison Fire Department will provide the 2-½ inch square signs. The 7-½ inch square signs can be purchased through fire, environmental and industrial safety supply companies.

General Requirements:

1. Signs shall be maintained at all times.
2. Numbers indicating the hazard levels shall be changed when hazard levels within the building change.
3. Signs shall not be obstructed from view.
4. Signs shall be durable and weather resistant.

