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Technical Bulletins: Cities and the Hazardous Chemical Right-to-Know Law

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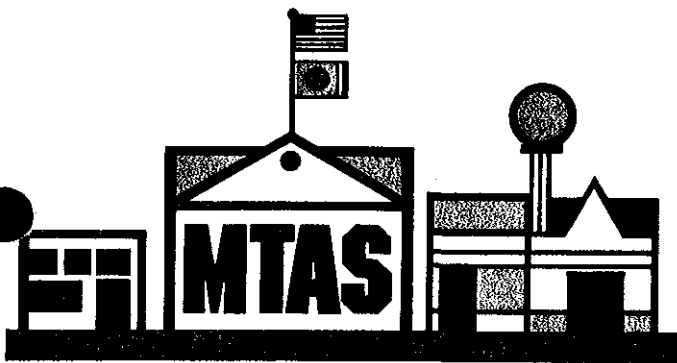
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TECHNICAL BULLETIN



MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
IN COOPERATION WITH THE TENNESSEE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

September 15, 1986

CITIES AND THE HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAW

By: Harold Yungmeyer, Municipal Consultant

In May, 1985, the State Legislature passed the "Hazardous Chemical Right-To-Know Law". The stated purpose of the law was to "provide access to information regarding hazardous chemicals to enhance the ability of manufacturing and non-manufacturing workers to minimize hazardous exposure to such chemicals; to provide information to emergency personnel to protect the public health, safety and welfare; and to provide information to citizens to enable them to make informed decisions regarding their safety, health and welfare".

This law is specifically applicable to cities and, although you may be under the impression that none of your employees work with, or are exposed to "hazardous chemicals", such is probably not the case. The odds are that you do have some hazardous chemicals on the premises and if you do have, you must comply with requirements of the law. The law also has implications for your fire department even if it is determined that no hazardous chemical exposures exist.

Generally, the law requires that you must:

1. Develop a hazardous chemical inventory list and submit it to the State Department of Labor by January 1, 1987. This same list should also be provided to your fire department. (If you store less than 55 gallons or 500 pounds of any hazardous chemical, this list is not required.)
2. Maintain and make available to employees complete information on any hazardous chemical to which they may be exposed.
3. Make sure that all hazardous chemicals are properly labeled.
4. Develop an education and training program to make employees aware of the precautions to be taken when working with hazardous chemicals. This program must be underway during calendar 1987.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the State Department of Labor, which is charged with the enforcement of this law, has developed a series of briefings and workshops to make employers aware of their responsibilities. The first of these informational workshops will be a one-half day overview of the law which has been specifically designed for elected and administrative officials. The times, dates and locations of these briefings are as follows:

9:00 a.m. - Noon September 23, Jackson - Civic Center
9:00 a.m. - Noon September 24, Nashville - T.S.U. Downtown Campus
9:00 a.m. - Noon September 25, Knoxville - Holiday Inn World's Fair

You are urged to have someone present at these initial briefings. Attendance will allow you to determine your obligation under the law and to obtain information on the methods of compliance.

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