

GHS - Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals - an introduction

The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals or GHS is an internationally agreed upon system set to replace the various different classification and labeling standards used in different countries. The current EU-approved methods for labeling of hazardous substances have been replaced. The new system is binding as of 01.12.2010 for substances and as of 01.07.2015 for mixtures. Until then appropriate transition rules will regulate the labeling process. What has changed?

Changed symbols (red framed diamond) with white background; the currently used square symbols with orange background have been replaced. The symbol "St. Andrew's cross" (Xn or Xi) is no longer valid.

Newly added symbols are the "gas cylinder" for compressed substances, the "exclamation mark" and the symbol "silhouette" for health hazards. How will the classification be applied?

The **hazardous classes** and **categories** are to be used for classification and not for labeling. The **hazardous class** describes the nature of the hazard and the **hazardous category** subdivides the **hazardous class** according to the gravity of the hazard.

Hazard pictogramm :



Signal word :

Danger

or

Warning

Hazard Statements H:

HNXX	N	2 (= Physical Hazards) 3 (= Health Hazards) 4 (= Environmental Hazards)	H	XX (= sequential number)
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and **EUH-phrases**

Precautionary Statements P:

PNXX	N	1 (= General) 2 (= prevention) 3 (= response) 4 (= storage) 5 (= disposal)	P	XX (= sequential number)
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A full explanation of the classification can be found on the United Nations website for the GHS at:
http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/ghs_welcome_e.html