I. PURPOSE
   A. Skagit County recognizes that its employees have a right and need to know the properties and potential safety and health problems of substances to which they may be exposed. This procedure provides guidelines for the implementation and maintenance of hazard communication to ensure compliance with the applicable federal and state standards and to safeguard the health of its employees.

II. APPLICABILITY
   A. The Hazard Communication Program is applicable to all employees working for Skagit County, including remote facilities and operations, which engage in the use of hazardous chemicals.

III. POLICY
   A. It is the policy of this organization to establish and implement a comprehensive Hazard Communication Policy, which fully meets the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.1200, the standard promulgated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and WAC 296-800 of the Washington Administrative Code. Accordingly, this organization shall ensure that:
      1. Information on the hazards of chemicals is transmitted to the affected employees
      2. Inventories of the hazardous chemicals stored or used are maintained and updated regularly
      3. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for hazardous chemicals are maintained in a hazardous database that is accessible to county employees thru the Skagit County Home Page. Facilities that do not have Internet access will be provided with a hazardous materials notebook that is in a central location where the chemicals are used and where employees may easily access.
      4. An employee training program is implemented to effectively provide employees with information and handling precautions on hazardous chemicals in their work place. This training shall be provided at the time of the employees’ initial assignment and whenever a new hazard is introduced into the work area.

IV. CHEMICAL INVENTORY and MATERIAL DATA SAFETY SHEETS
   A. Skagit County Risk Management Department is responsible to ensure that the Hazard Communication Program is implemented and shall:
      1. Ensure that the necessary resources needed to comply with the Hazard Communication Standard Program are made available to the employees
2. Ensure that employees attend required training and responds to request for information in a timely manner
3. Ensures that MSDS are maintained and that all new chemicals introduced into the work area are accompanied by a MSDS, which is added to the current data base inventory or notebook
4. Maintain an accurate inventory of hazardous chemicals used in the work area that is updated on a regular basis, which should be at a minimum of once a year

B. Employee Responsibilities
1. Reading MSDS and labels to become familiar with the safety precautions, chemical and physical properties, and potential health hazards of the chemical prior to handling the chemicals
2. Exercise all necessary precautions in the safe use and handling hazardous chemicals including wearing personal protective equipment as specified on the MSDS or recommended by the Risk Management Department or their supervisor
3. Notification to the Risk Management Department or their Supervisor of any apparent deficiencies involving hazardous communication, such as missing MSDS’S, improperly labeled containers, or chemicals found to not be listed in the hazardous chemical inventory
4. Report all working conditions to the Risk Management Department or their Supervisor which could cause potential exposure to hazardous chemicals
5. Attend and participate in scheduled required training sessions for hazard communications.

V. MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS
   A. The material safety data sheet is a document that describes the physical and chemical properties of products, their physical and health hazards, and precautions for safe storage, handling and use. A MSDS is required for each hazardous chemical used. Employees are not required to work with a hazardous material until an MSDS is made available for their review.
      1. MSDS sheets shall be kept at a central location in the work area that is accessible to all employees if internet access is not available and
      2. These MSDS sheets shall be kept in a notebook in an organized manner (i.e. alphabetically) so they may be readily located and reviewed by an employee when required.
      3. When the use of a chemical is discontinued the MSDS shall be removed from the notebook and noted DISCONTINUED, and then placed in a separate file to be maintained for 30 years to provide a record of employee exposure in the event of future medical complications.
      4. All MSDS sheets shall conform to the OSHA standard CFR 1910.1200.

VI. LABELS AND OTHER FORMS OF WARNINGS
   A. Every container of hazardous chemicals shall be properly labeled or tagged with the following:
      1. Identity of the hazardous chemical
      2. Appropriate hazard warning including target organ effects
3. Name and address of the chemical manufacturer, importer or other responsible party

B. Labels or tags shall be legible and prominently displayed on the container.
C. Portable containers into which chemicals are transferred from the primary container, and are intended for immediate use of the employee who performs the transfer is exempt from these labeling requirements. These exempt containers should still be labeled with the identity of the contents.

VII. EMPLOYEE TRAINING
A. Employees at Skagit County who work with, or are potentially exposed to hazardous chemicals during the normal course of their work, or in a foreseeable emergency, shall receive information and training at the time of the employees' initial assignment, a change in the employee's assignment, and whenever a new hazard is introduced into the work area.
B. Training shall include:
   1. The requirements of the WISHA Hazard Communication Standard and employees rights and responsibilities
   2. Operations in employees' work areas, which involve the use of hazardous chemicals
   3. The location and availability of the Hazard Communication Program, the hazardous chemical inventories, and the Material Safety Data Sheets for chemicals in their work area
   4. The physical and health hazards associated with chemicals in the work area
   5. The measures that employees can take to protect themselves from these hazards, such as appropriate work practices, emergency procedures, and use of personal protective equipment
   6. The contents of the Hazard Communication Program, including an explanation of the labeling requirements and how to read, understand, and obtain an MSDS for a chemical used or stored in their work area.
C. All training shall be documented and a file maintained specifying the names of all personnel trained, the date of training, and the person conducting the training.