GHS – Landscaping Stats and Facts



FACTS

Key hazards related to the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) in the landscaping industry.

1. **Misunderstanding Labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS)**
   - **Hazard:** Workers may misinterpret GHS labels or Safety Data Sheets.
1. **Inadequate Training**
   - Lack of proper training on GHS can leave workers unaware of the hazards associated with the chemicals.
1. **Improper Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
   - Workers may not understand the importance of PPE as outlined in the GHS documentation.
1. **Chemical Spills and Environmental Contamination**
   - Inadequate knowledge of GHS can lead to improper storage or handling of chemicals risking spills.
1. **Accidental Mixing of Incompatible Chemicals**
   - Misinterpreting GHS labels or SDS can lead to the accidental mixing of incompatible chemicals, resulting in hazardous reactions like fires, explosions, or the release of toxic gases.
1. **Exposure to Pesticides and Herbicides**
   - Misunderstanding the GHS hazard classifications can lead to improper application, increasing the risk of acute poisoning or long-term health effects like cancer.
1. **Lack of Emergency Response Knowledge**
   - Workers may not be fully aware of the emergency procedures associated with chemical exposure.

STATS

- According to OSHA, workplaces that have fully adopted GHS-compliant labeling and

safety data sheets (SDS) have seen a reduction in incidents related to chemical exposure, though specific percentages for landscaping are not detailed.

- In the landscaping and groundskeeping sector, the U.S. (EPA) estimates that 10-20% of workers experience pesticide-related illnesses annually. These illnesses often occur due to inadequate labeling, improper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), or lack of awareness, issues that GHS seeks to address.
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), there were approximately 1,500 injuries and illnesses related to chemical exposure across all industries in 2020. Landscaping workers, who often handle pesticides and fertilizers, are at significant risk of such exposure.
- (CCOHS) reports that improper handling or labeling of chemicals, which GHS aims to standardize, can lead to skin burns, respiratory issues, and poisoning in outdoor workers, including those in landscaping.