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AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL SCIENCE
INFORMATION SUPPORT FOR
TEACHERS AND TECHNICIANS

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Transportation of school chemicals

Posted by Anonymous on Thu, 2019-12-12 17:23

Transportation of school chemicals: What are the rules for transporting school chemicals in private vehicles?

Recently a University approached me with some surplus chemicals they were going to dispose of via manifesto (which, after treatment, go to landfill). Most of these chemicals were in good condition, but some were listed as hazardous. Although only small quantities, I was hesitant to take any, as I was unsure of the consequences of carrying small amounts of both non hazardous and hazardous chemicals in my car, even over small distances.

Should lab technicians transport small quantities in their cars, and what are the general rulings regarding this and thinking about insurance?

Voting:



No votes yet

Year Level:

7

8

9

10

Senior Secondary

Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

Answer by labsupport on question Transportation of school chemicals

Submitted by sat on 12 December 2019

There are several aspects to consider regarding the transportation and acceptance of donations of chemicals for school science:

1. Regulations for transporting hazardous chemicals
2. Using a private vehicle for work related purposes
3. Insurance for using a private vehicle and transporting hazardous chemicals for school science
4. Considerations for accepting donations of chemicals

1. Regulations for transporting hazardous chemicals

Transport of hazardous chemicals is regulated at a state level.¹ You should check with your state/territory regulator, see *Competent authorities for the transport of dangerous goods by road and rail*² which has links to the different states and territories. There may be exemptions for transporting small quantities of Dangerous Goods.^{3,4,5}

Therefore, you may be able to transport small quantities of Dangerous Goods subject to safety requirements such as

- Having compliant labelling
- Following separation and segregation rules for incompatible chemicals.
- Being safely loaded and well secured
- Ensuring good ventilation for the driver, (this may mean not being transported in the passenger compartment or an enclosed space)
- Avoiding the exposure of the chemicals to high heat and moisture.

2. Using a private vehicle for work related purposes.

Most schools discourage the use of private vehicles for school purposes. You should find out what your school policy is for the use of your private vehicle for work related purposes.

You may need to obtain permission from your school and provide evidence from your car insurer that you are covered for using your private vehicle for work related purposes.⁶

3. Insurance for transporting hazardous chemicals for school science

Some school jurisdictions have policies for the transport of hazardous or dangerous goods and may only allow transport of non-hazardous chemicals.^{7, 8}

You should also check with your car insurance company if you are covered for using your private vehicle for transporting hazardous or dangerous goods for work related purposes.

Ensuring that you have the correct insurance will avoid many problems in the unfortunate event of an accident.

4. Considerations for accepting donations of chemicals

Schools are often offered donations of chemicals; however, it is important to make sure that the chemicals:

- and their container are in good condition and have compliant labelling
- are approved for use in your jurisdiction;
- are not contaminated
- have an appropriate SDS provided from the donating organisation

Science ASSIST advises against accepting donations of chemicals unless you can verify that the above conditions are met. If a school accepts donations and they are not suitable, then the school may end up bearing the cost of any chemical waste disposal.

Check if your school jurisdiction has a policy concerning donations of chemicals.^{9, 10}

In conclusion: it may be possible to transport small quantities of chemicals safely for work purposes if your school policy and car insurance allows, but Science ASSIST recommends the consideration of correct packaging and use of a suitable courier to transport dangerous/reactive laboratory chemicals. Science ASSIST also recommends caution in accepting donations of chemicals.

References:

¹ 'Hazardous chemicals', Safe Work Australia website, <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/hazards/chemicals/haza...> (Link Updated September 2022)

² 'Competent Authorities for Road and Rail Transport', The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development website, <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/transport/australia/dangerous/componen...> (Updated April 2021)

³ 'Transporting dangerous goods for personal or 'tools of trade' use', Business Queensland website, <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/transport/dangerous-goods/personal-tools-trade>

⁴ Transporting small quantities of dangerous goods: Tools of trade', Worksafe Victoria website, <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/safely-transporting-dangerous-...> (Link updated August 2022)

⁵ 'Transporting dangerous goods', WA Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety website, <http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Transporting-retail-amounts-of-3211.aspx> (Link Updated December 2021)

⁶ 'Private Car Use', Department of Education and Training Victoria website, <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/privatecar.aspx> (Search for 'Private car use')

⁷ 'Managing risks with chemicals in Department of Education workplaces', <https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/managing-risks-in-school-curriculum-activi...> Search for 'Guideline for managing risks with chemicals in DoE workplaces'

<https://mpe.education.qld.gov.au/initiativesstrategies/Documents/guideli...> see 4.7 Transport of chemicals in private vehicles for work purposes (Link Updated May 2021).

⁸ 'Chemical Safety in Schools' NSW DoE website, search for 'Section 1.3.4: Transporting dangerous goods' (Login required)

⁹ 'Managing risks with chemicals in Department of Education workplaces', [http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/hr/workplace/Pages/Managing-Risks-with-Chemicals-in-Department-of-Education,-Training-and-Employment-\(DETE\)-Workplaces.aspx](http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/hr/workplace/Pages/Managing-Risks-with-Chemicals-in-Department-of-Education,-Training-and-Employment-(DETE)-Workplaces.aspx) Search for 'Guideline for managing risks with chemicals in DoE workplaces' <https://mpe.education.qld.gov.au/initiativesstrategies/Documents/guideli...> see 4.1 Purchasing (Link Updated May 2021).

¹⁰ 'Chemical Safety in Schools' NSW DoE website, search for 'Section 1.8.4: Donations of chemicals' (Login required)

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