

How to Ship Hazardous Goods via Air

When shipping hazardous or dangerous goods, it is up to the shipper to ensure that the goods are properly classified, packaged, and labeled according to government and carrier regulations. Ensure that the persons handling the goods have had recent HAZMAT training, and that they are provided with the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for the goods.

1. To determine whether the product is hazardous, check out section 14 of the SDS (Safety Data Sheet). This classification provides a four-digit ID number, a proper shipping name, the hazard class, and the packing group for the product. Pay careful attention to the information that pertains specifically to shipments by air, and be sure to follow the information closely, as any variation from the manufacturer's instructions could compromise the integrity of the package and may be considered a violation of the Hazardous Material Regulations (HMR).
2. Take note of the packing group assigned to the product. This will tell you the degree of danger presented by the product, and whether special UN-Specification packaging is needed or not. This includes using the specified inner and outer packaging and closure materials, if applicable. If UN-Specification packaging (PDF) is required, read the package closure instructions carefully and obtain all the materials listed in instructions, such as tape, zip ties, poly bags, etc.
3. Have the HAZMAT trained employee look up the material in the Hazardous Materials Table or the ICAO TI, as required, to determine the authorized quantities permitted to be shipped, labels required, and the allowable packaging as per the 49 CFR Part 173 or the applicable ICAO TI packing instruction. If shipping liquids in single packages by air, review the additional requirements under 49 CFR Part 173.27(c)(3)(ii).
4. Once you have the correct packaging figured out, you will need to determine the hazard communication specific to the product. This could include markings and labels, as well as certain shipping papers related to the product. Be sure to follow the correct regulations when it comes to marking, labeling, and placarding. There are specific ways to mark your hazardous materials depending on their class, ID number, weight, and more. Generally, the shippers name and address, the UN Number and the Proper Shipping Name are required on the package. Hazard class labels and orientation arrows may also be needed, depending on the product.

5. If required, prepare a shipping paper that contains a description of the hazmat, including the UN identification number, proper shipping name, hazard class, and packing group, quantity, number and type of packages, emergency contact information, and a shipper's certification. You must prepare all requested documents to ensure your shipment goes out and is not delayed or held up.
6. Next, package the product, mark and label the package, and seal the package in accordance with the packaging regulations.
7. Fill out the shipping paper, and affix it to the package in an unobstructed area.
8. At last, your hazardous goods are ready to ship!
9. Make sure you keep the Shipper's Declaration on file for two years after shipment.