Process Safety Documentation  
The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly  

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ABSTRACT

We all pay lip service to the need for good process safety documentation. PHAs are required to be kept for the life of the process and must be readable by the next team in five years. Process safety information provides the anchor on which our processes are based. Management of change documentation is essential to understanding the technical bases of changes and ensuring that they are implemented correctly. There are multiple requirements for good mechanical integrity documentation. While we all recognize the need for good documentation, in many cases the documentation itself receives less attention than necessary. There are numerous reasons for this in budgetary, personnel, and time constraints. None-the-less, good documentation is a must.

In this paper, the authors present examples of good and bad documentation. They describe why from safety and liability standpoints as well as legal requirements it is essential that all PSM documentation be maintained with high standards. Finally, they describe systems that can be implemented to ensure that high quality documentation is maintained and show how it can be done, if not without effort, at least in ways that are less onerous than some other methods currently in use.

Ms Brown has eleven years experience in the chemical and synthetic fibers industry and has been involved in implementing the OSHA PSM rule since its inception. She is a graduate chemical engineer from Clemson University and is currently the Process Safety and Health Manager for the FMC, Lithium Division facility in Bessemer City, North Carolina.

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