2.1 Describe the major hazard groups.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) 2015 divides hazardous products into two major hazard groups based on their specific hazardous properties: physical and health.

Physical hazard group are the hazardous products that are dangerous because they can cause damage due to fire or explosion. They include flammables, combustibles, oxidizers, and compressed gas.

Health hazard group are the hazardous products that are dangerous because they can cause health effects. These can range from acute toxicity (death) to mild irritants.

It is possible for a hazardous product to belong to more than one hazard group. For example, benzene has both hazardous physical and health properties.

The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) has an additional hazard group called the *Environmental hazard group*. This group is defined as hazardous products that cause harm to the environment. This hazard group was not adapted by Canada's WHMIS 2015 program, although including information about environmental hazards is allowed. Information about the environmental hazard group may be seen on the safety data sheets (SDS) and its pictogram may be on supplier labels.

These hazard groups are further divided into **hazard classes** and **categories** to help define the specifics of the hazards.

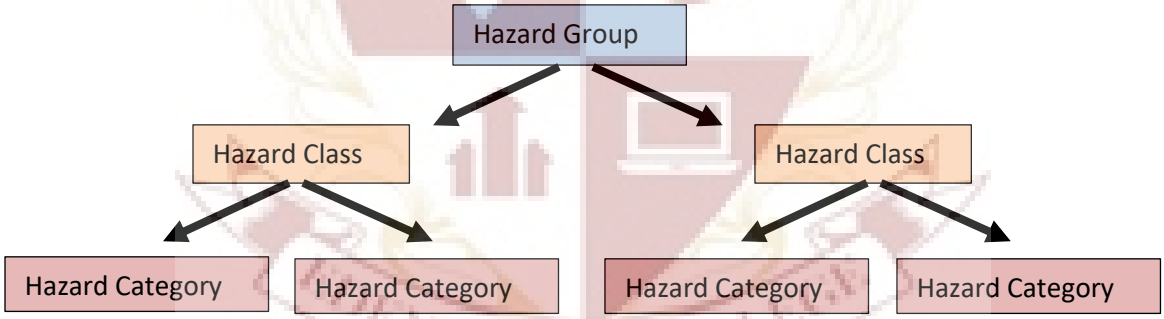


Figure 1: Levels of Hazardous Products Classification