

Safety Matters

Provided by: Henderson Brothers

Welding and Cutting Safety

Welding and cutting tasks are dangerous, even for the most experienced worker. To avoid injuries on the job, consider these safety recommendations:

- Always check for fire hazards before you start welding. Wood, paper and other flammable materials should be removed from the area. Flammable liquids should be removed as well.
- Clean wood floors before welding over them. Then, cover them with metal or some other material that will not burn. It may also be a good idea to wet the floor, though this can cause an added shock hazard. Guard against these hazards as necessary.
- Seal cracks so that sparks or slag cannot fall through them, and never allow these hot materials to fall into machine pits.
- Shield open doorways, broken windows and similar openings with a welding curtain or shield made of a fire-resistant material. Hot slag may roll along a floor, so be sure the curtain or shield is in contact with the floor.
- If you must weld near combustible materials, a fire extinguisher, pail of water, fire hose or a pail of sand should be at hand. It may be necessary to have a worker stand by with a fire extinguisher to put out sparks as well.
- If you are welding or cutting a tank or drum containing flammable liquids or gas, do not start your operation until an approved test shows that there is no dangerous vapor present. Do not rely on another employee's word that the tank or drum was tested previously; insist on a new test before you start your work.
- Make sure your work area is properly ventilated. Many of these operations produce fumes that are harmful in heavy concentrations, and good ventilation is one of the best methods of protecting yourself against this. Utilize special ventilating equipment if necessary.
- Wear face and eye protection such as goggles and a helmet to protect against hazards. Welders working with metal, chipping and cleaning should always have their helmets lowered to prevent throw particles of metal from coming into the eyes. Eye protection, such as goggles, are worn to protect against sparks, slag and molten metal, and flash burns caused by radiation from the welding equipment.



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Your Commitment to Safety

Make safety a top priority as you weld and cut. Taking these precautions will lower your risk of occupational injuries, which will make your job much more safe and enjoyable.