
29 C.F.R. § 1917.152

Welding, cutting and heating (hot work) 12 (See also § 1917.2, definition of Hazardous cargo, materials, substance, or atmosphere).

- (a) *Definition.* “Hot work” means riveting, welding, flame cutting or other fire or spark-producing operation.
- (b) *Hot work in confined spaces.* Hot work shall not be performed in a confined space until a designated person has tested the atmosphere and determined that it is not hazardous.
- (c) *Fire protection.* (1) To the extent possible, hot work shall be performed in designated locations that are free of fire hazards.
- (2) When hot work must be performed in a location that is not free of fire hazards, all necessary precautions shall be taken to confine heat, sparks, and slag so that they cannot contact flammable or combustible material.
- (3) Fire extinguishing equipment suitable for the location shall be immediately available and shall be maintained in readiness for use at all times.
- (4) When the hot work operation is such that normal fire prevention precautions are not sufficient, additional personnel shall be assigned to guard against fire during hot work and for a sufficient time after completion of the work to ensure that no fire hazard remains. The employer shall instruct all employees involved in hot work operations as to potential fire hazards and the use of firefighting equipment.
- (5) Drums and containers which contain or have contained flammable or combustible liquids shall be kept closed. Empty containers shall be removed from the hot work area.
- (6) When openings or cracks in flooring cannot be closed, precautions shall be taken to ensure that no employees or flammable or combustible materials on the floor below are exposed to sparks dropping through the floor. Similar precautions shall be taken regarding cracks or holes in walls, open doorways and open or broken windows.
- (7) Hot work shall not be performed:
- (i) In flammable or potentially flammable atmospheres:
- (ii) On or in equipment or tanks that have contained flammable gas or liquid or combustible liquid or dust-producing material, until a designated person has tested the atmosphere inside the equipment or tanks and determined that it is not hazardous; or
- (iii) Near any area in which exposed readily ignitable materials such as bulk sulphur, baled paper or cotton are stored. Bulk sulphur is excluded from this prohibition if suitable precautions are followed, the person in charge is knowledgeable and the person performing the work has been instructed in preventing and extinguishing sulphur fires.
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(8)

(i) Drums, containers or hollow structures that have contained flammable or combustible substances shall either be filled with water or cleaned, and shall then be ventilated. A designated person shall test the atmosphere and determine that it is not hazardous before hot work is performed on or in such structures.

(ii) Before heat is applied to a drum, container or hollow structure, an opening to release built-up pressure during heat application shall be provided.

(d) *Gas welding and cutting.* (1) Compressed gas cylinders:

(i) Shall have valve protection caps in place except when in use, hooked up or secured for movement. Oil shall not be used to lubricate caps;

(ii) Shall be hoisted only while secured, as on a cradle or pallet, and shall not be hoisted by magnet, choker sling or cylinder caps;

(iii) Shall be moved only by tilting or rolling on their bottom edges;

(iv) Shall be secured when moved by vehicle;

(v) Shall be secured while in use;

(vi) Shall have valves closed when cylinders are empty, being moved or stored;

(vii) Shall be secured upright except when hoisted or carried;

(viii) Shall not be freed when frozen by prying the valves or caps with bars or by hitting the valve with a tool;

(ix) Shall not be thawed by boiling water;

(x) Shall not be exposed to sparks, hot slag, or flame;

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