

Welding & Other Hot Work Safety Tips

Welding and other types of hot work are one of the leading causes of industrial fires throughout the country. A few basic precautions before, during and following any hot work operations can greatly reduce the risk of fire leading to serious damage and injuries. Chapter 35 of the International Fire Code or NFPA 51B can provide guidance on how to set up a Hot Work Program.



Follow these precautions:

- Hot work includes welding, cutting, brazing, soldering, grinding or any other similar activity which can produce heat or sparks.
- Perform a “prework check” of the area prior to starting
- Clean the area where the work will be done to remove combustible dusts, papers and debris
- Relocate combustible materials at least 35 feet away from hot work areas
- Use rated partitions to separate the area from fixed combustible objects
- Do not allow hot work if the fire sprinkler system is turned off
- A fire watch is required during hot work activities, and at least 30 minutes afterwards
- A good practice is to prohibit hot work within 1 hour of the work shift ending
- Fire extinguishers should be readily available, and employees should be trained on their use

- When hot work is performed on one side of a wall, combustibles should be moved from the other side
- Cover cracks, openings and ducts in walls to prevent sparks from traveling to other areas

