



SAFETY SHARE

March 17, 2016

Working with Flammables

Operations in our industry use flammable substances such as gasoline, solvent cleaners and solvent based marker paints nearly every day. These substances are necessary for doing our jobs but their use can present some dangers that we need to be reminded of. When using flammable substances please keep the following safety tips in mind:

- Work with flammables in well ventilated areas. For most operations this is not a major concern but it warrants repeating as these substances are also used in home environments.
- Remember not to use flammables near open flames or heating elements and keep away from welding operations
- **DO NOT place spray paint cans on or near the heating element on the pavers. The heat can cause the cans to explode.**
- Use only approved metal or plastic containers when storing flammable substances
- Do not use these containers for anything but storing flammables.
- It is best to store the flammables in their original containers or in safety containers that are approved for the storage of flammable substances.
- Store fuel gas cylinders and oxygen cylinders away from each other or with an approved fire resistant barrier between the two (exception – when a part of torch rig).
- Keep the appropriate fire extinguishers handy. In most cases this type of extinguisher is a dry powder ABC fire extinguisher. Keep fire extinguishers away from extreme heat sources as they can build up pressure and burst.
- Know where the SDS's are located for the flammable substances that you use. Read them and understand the hazards for that substance.

Make sure that you know what to do in the event of a spill and how you would prevent such an occurrence.

Remember:

Flammable substances pose not only a fire risk they almost always pose some type of health risk. Many can affect your nervous system and can be fatal depending on length and concentration of exposure. Repeated skin exposure to many solvents can lead to drying and cracking of the skin resulting in possible infection. Use proper PPE, such as safety glasses/goggles and appropriate gloves, when handling solvents.