

Welding, Cutting, & Brazing: Fire Prevention

Handout

Overview

Welding and metal cutting operations produce molten metal, sparks, weld spatter, slag, and hot work surfaces. All of these can create a situation which can cause fires. At 1910.252 General requirements, OSHA addresses fire hazards.

When are fire watchers required?

A fire watcher is required in situations where:

- other than a minor fire might develop.
- combustible material is located within 35 feet of the work.
- combustible material is located more than 35 feet away but can be easily ignited by sparks.
- wall or floor openings within 35 feet expose combustible material in adjacent areas or concealed wall or floor spaces.
- combustible materials are located on the opposite side of surfaces being welded.
- The fire watch is to be maintained for at least 30 minutes following completion of the work.

Fire watchers

Fire watchers are additional personnel who:

- provide additional safeguards against fire during and after the welding, cutting, or heating operations.
- must be trained on the specific fire hazards for that job and location.
- know where fire prevention equipment is located and how to use it. Fire prevention equipment must be on hand, and readily available for use.

Additional information

Your employer will explain:

- the company's welding 'best practices.'
- the need to check for fire hazards prior to welding or cutting.
- how to obtain a 'hot work' permit.
- how to report fires.

