



SAFETY VISIONS

Summer 2025

This issue contains essential safety articles to help you comply with Ohio's workers' compensation regulations to effectively manage your small business this winter.

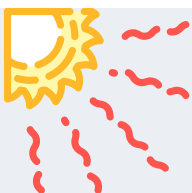
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safety TIPS for Hot Work

It's crucial to be cautious. Wear your personal protective equipment (PPE), maintain a safe workplace, and follow safety rules.

When you weld, cut, or grind, the potential for accidents is significant. Eyes and skin can be burned, hearing can be damaged, and an electric shock can kill you. Among the hot metal, sparks, and flying chips, are compressed gases stored in high-pressure cylinders. Even the fumes and gases produced during the welding process can damage your respiratory system or cause asphyxiation.

It's crucial to be cautious. Wear your personal protective equipment (PPE), maintain a safe workspace, and follow safety rules. Your PPE should include:



- Eye protection - to help shield against sparks, molten metal and welder's flash.
- Hearing protection.
- Clothing made of heat-resistant materials, such as an apron made of leather.
- Safety boots.
- Gloves made of leather or other flameproof fabric.
- Respiratory protection - to help protect against toxic chemicals and gases. Before using a respirator, get proper training and have it properly fitted.

Wearing the right PPE is just the first step.

You must also keep your work area safety and follow these safety rules:

- Try to weld only in well-ventilated areas.
- Work in confined spaces only if they've been atmosphere-tested. Follow all other confined space procedures.
- Do not weld, cut, or grind near flammable or combustible materials, liquids, vapors, and dusts.
- Have the appropriate fire extinguisher close by.
- Use only approved equipment in good condition and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Inspect equipment for loose connections, bare wires, or cables before operating. Make sure the machinery is properly grounded.
- Handle compressed gas cylinders safely, following proper use and storage procedures.
- Keep aisles and stairways clear of cables and equipment.
- Keep other people at a safe distance from welding and cutting operations.
- Learn first aid techniques for burns, poison inhalation, shock, and eye injuries.
- Know where the safety showers and eyewash stations are.

You should also watch for symptoms of metal fume fever, caused by breathing fumes formed while welding. Symptoms may include a metallic taste in the mouth, dry nose and throat, weakness, fatigue, joint and muscle pain, fever, chills, and nausea. Notify your supervisor immediately if you experience any of these symptoms.

For more information:

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Avoiding Insect Bites & Stings

Insect bites and stings can pose serious health risks for individuals. Workers may develop severe allergic reactions from stings from bees and wasps, which can be fatal. Employers must educate their employees about the dangers of insect exposure.

To minimize the risk of encountering bees, wasps, and hornets, consider wearing light-colored, smooth clothing. Avoid using perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants, as well as colognes and perfumes. It's best to steer clear of bananas and any banana-scented products. Maintain clean clothing and shower daily, as sweat can attract bees. Aim to cover as much of your skin as possible with clothing and try to avoid flowering plants. Wasps are often found near areas where food is discarded, so it's essential to remain calm if a single stinging insect flies nearby—swatting at it may provoke a sting. If multiple stinging insects attack you, it's advisable to run to safety. Moving indoors or to a shaded area is preferable to staying in an open space. Avoid jumping into water, as some insects may hover above it. If a bee enters your vehicle, pull over slowly and open all windows.

For tick bites, it is recommended to wear a hat and light-colored clothing. Long-sleeved shirts and pants should be tucked into work boots or socks, and using insect repellents with 20 to 30 percent DEET is an effective measure. Be sure to check your skin and clothing for ticks daily. To prevent mosquito bites, cover as much skin as possible and avoid perfumes and colognes. If you can, limit outdoor work during dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active, and use insect repellents containing 20 to 30 percent DEET.

For more information:
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Who Pays for PPE?

AND WHAT IS NOT COVERED?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandates that employers take measures to safeguard employees from workplace hazards that could lead to injury or illness. When it is not possible to implement engineering, work practice, or administrative controls that adequately protect workers, employers are responsible for providing personal protective equipment (PPE) and ensuring its proper use. Employers must cover the cost of various PPE, including metatarsal foot protection, rubber boots with steel toes, non-prescription eye protection, prescription eyewear inserts or lenses for full-face respirators, goggles, face shields, firefighting gear such as helmets, gloves, boots, proximity suits, and full gear, hard hats, hearing protection, and welding PPE. However, there are exceptions to the payment rule, which include non-specialty safety-toe protective footwear, non-specialty prescription safety eyewear, and regular clothing.

Items like ordinary clothing, skin creams, or those solely meant for weather protection do not fall under this requirement. Items such as hairnets and gloves for consumer safety. Lifting belts for back protection. Finally, if an employee loses or deliberately damages their protective equipment (PPE).



For more information:
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While many employers are required to keep a record of workplace accidents, injuries, and illnesses through their Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) logs, some treatments are minor enough that they do not need to be logged.

The following lists situations in which treatments would be considered First-Aid and thus not recordable for OSHA logs:

- Using a non-prescription medication at non-prescription strength (for medications available in both prescription and non-prescription form, a recommendation by a physician or other licensed health care professional to use a non-prescription medication at prescription strength is considered medical treatment for recordkeeping purposes).
- Administering tetanus immunizations (other immunizations, such as Hepatitis B vaccine or rabies vaccine, are considered medical treatment).
- Cleaning, flushing, or soaking wounds on the surface of the skin.
- Using wound coverings such as bandages, Band-Aids TM, gauze pads, etc.; or using butterfly bandages or Steri-Strips TM (other wound closing devices such as sutures, staples, etc., are considered medical treatment);
- Using hot or cold therapy.
- Using any non-rigid means of support, such as elastic bandages, wraps, non-rigid back belts, etc. (devices with rigid stays or other systems designed to immobilize parts of the body are considered medical treatment for recordkeeping purposes);
- Using temporary immobilization devices while transporting an accident victim (e.g., splints, slings, neck collars, back boards, etc.).
- Drilling of a fingernail or toenail to relieve pressure, or draining fluid from a blister.
- Using eye patches.
- Removing foreign bodies from the eye using only irrigation or a cotton swab.
- Removing splinters or foreign material from areas other than the eye by irrigation, tweezers, cotton swabs or other simple means.
- Using finger guards.
- Using massages (physical therapy or chiropractic treatment are considered medical treatment for recordkeeping purposes);
- Drinking fluids for relief of heat stress.
- The conduct of diagnostic procedures, such as x-rays and blood tests, including the administration of prescription medications used solely for diagnostic purposes (e.g., eye drops to dilate pupils).

For more information:

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Safety Services Offered by the Division of Safety and Hygiene

Access additional DS&H resources by
clicking on "Safety Services" at
www.bwc.ohio.gov.

The mission of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation's Division of Safety and Hygiene (DS&H) is to maintain a healthy, productive, and competitive workforce in Ohio. A portion of employer premiums are used to fund the DS&H, which offers a variety of safety resources, including:

- Safety programs offering rebates on workers' compensation premiums.
- Safety courses.
- The Ohio Safety Congress & Expo, the largest safety event in the Midwest.
- Safety consultation services, including the Occupational Safety and Health.
- Administration (OSHA) On-site Consultation Program.
- Ergonomics and industrial hygiene consultation services.
- Safety grants, providing assistance to improve safety conditions; and,
- Library services, such as: books, magazines, research materials, and safety videos.

DON'T BLOCK IT!

Safety Clearance Distances for Equipment

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Electrical Code (NEC) outline the minimum required clearance around electrical panels. These requirements include a depth of 36 inches, a width of 30 inches, and a height of 78 inches. These dimensions provide workers with sufficient space to carry out tasks safely and effectively.

Fire extinguishers should be positioned for quick accessibility for employees, mounted at a height of at least 4 inches off the ground and no more than 5 feet high. However, for extinguishers weighing over 40 pounds, the maximum height is limited to 3 feet 6 inches.

Wheeled fire extinguishers can be placed directly on the ground since their wheels prevent the cylinder from contacting the floor. Most authorities having jurisdiction (AHJs) require a minimum clearance of 36 inches in front of the extinguisher, provided it remains visible. This 36-inch clearance is based on NFPA 70-2011, Article 110.26, regarding electrical control panels.

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TIPS FOR HANDLING & STORING

COMPRESSED GAS



Hazards associated with compressed gases include oxygen displacement, fires, explosions, and toxic gas exposures, as well as the physical hazards associated with a ruptured cylinder. Special storage, use, and handling precautions are necessary to control these hazards.

Some safety tips for compressed gas cylinders include:

- Each cylinder should clearly indicate what is contained within it. Do not use any cylinder you cannot positively identify as to its contents.
- Store cylinders in a dry, cool, well-ventilated area away from heat sources, electrical wiring, and at least 20 feet from other combustible materials.
- Store cylinders upright using a chain, wall-mounted clamp, or floor bracket with valve protection caps in place (if provided) until cylinders are secured and connected for use.
- Oxygen cylinders in storage must be separated from fuel-gas cylinders or combustible materials (especially oil or grease), a minimum distance of 20 feet or by a noncombustible barrier at least 5 feet high having a fire-resistance rating of at least one-half hour.
- Move cylinders only when necessary. Secure each cylinder upright and move with a suitable hand truck, lift truck, or crane with a cradle or platform. Slings, ropes, or chains are acceptable if the cylinder is equipped by the manufacturer with lifting attachments. Avoid dragging or sliding cylinders, and do not lift cylinders by the cap.
- Do not use oil or grease on the cylinders or handle them with greasy hands or with gloves that are greasy.

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