

Hot Work Permit Policy

Lines of Business: General Liability, Property, Completed Operations, Workers Compensation

Risk Control Strategy / Key Issues: Implement a hot work permit policy to reduce the potential for accidental fires from welding, cutting, soldering, sweating pipes and other hot work.

Suggested Program Elements:

1. Definition of Hot Work:

Hot work refers to any work involving operations that create heat in the form of sparks, slag, fire, or convection. Some examples include cutting or grinding metals, or soldering, brazing or welding, even sweating pipes. The hazard from hot work is the potential to cause a fire and or burns to those working in the area. Below are some suggested controls when performing hot work.

2. Potential for Loss:

In the past, service technicians' joining pipes have caused fires when the sparks from cutting tools and or heat from direct contact with torches has caused wood, laundry lint, or dust to catch on fire. These losses can be enormous. In most cases a fire resulted, causing property damage, contents loss, and loss of income to the business they were working at. There's also the potential for human loss from a fire.

Technicians are not always working in the best environments. Often they are in dark, cluttered basements, tight spaces. Precautions need to be taken. Encourage workers to use a flash light to see what is around the hot work area, move items if possible, shield them with materials that will withstand heat or sparks, ave a fire extinguisher ready (NOT in the service truck), and post a fire watch for a half hour after the work is finished.

3. Policy Statement:

Management should train all service technicians about the hazards of hot work and the potential for loss and require them to review the entity's Hot Work Policy and Hot Work Permit Process. The Hot Work Policy from management should state that any and all work that can create heat and or sparks has to be performed under the guidelines of a Hot Work Permit.

4. The Hot Work Permit should include the following steps:

1. Remove the flammable or combustible hazards (dust, lint, saw dust, wood, paper, cardboard, clothing, flammable liquids)
2. Vacuum up dusts before hot work begins
3. Block sparks and or heat from reaching combustible materials.
4. Protect or block cracks and holes so heat and or sparks do not travel into these areas.
5. Have the correct type of fire extinguisher on hand at the site of the work.
6. Post a fire watch for a half hour or more after the work is completed.
7. Record time work began
8. Record time work ended
9. Record time fire watch began and ended

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