

FIRE PREVENTION

OVER ►

In addition to energized electrical equipment (such as generators, power tools, power lines, etc.), there are many sources/materials regularly encountered in the construction industry that pose fire hazards. They can be flammable, combustible or explosive and can be solids, liquids or gas (ex. sawdust, wood chips, paper, plastics, cleaning solvents, gasoline, etc.). Fires can start and spread quickly, and the hazards can vary considerably so it's important to have fire prevention, detection and control systems that are appropriate for the type and location of work being done.

Fire Prevention Tips

- >> Know how a fire starts.
- >> Know what you can do to prevent a fire from happening.
- >> Have emergency plans in place in the event of a fire.
- >> Know how to use a fire extinguisher.



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Know How a Fire Starts

A fire will start whenever any flammable or combustible material (referred to as '**fuel**') comes in contact with an ignition source (referred to as '**heat**') while in the presence of an oxidizer, such as '**oxygen**' thus causing a '**chain reaction**'. The ignition source (i.e., '**heat**') could be something as simple as a spark, static electricity, furnaces, welding, cigarettes, heating elements, open flame etc. The fire will continue as long as the four ingredients ('**fuel**', '**heat**', '**oxygen**' and '**chain reaction**') are present, and may or may not result in an explosion.

Know What You Can Do to Prevent a Fire from Happening

- Identify the tools, equipment, materials, and work processes that have the potential to start a fire.
- Ensure any flammable, combustible, or explosive material is properly labeled and stored.
- Regularly inspect power tools, extension cords and other electrical equipment to ensure they are in good condition. Ensure maintenance is done as required.
- Ensure you have the appropriate fire extinguisher for the type of fire you may have.
- Conduct regular housekeeping. Dispose of garbage, oils rags on a regular basis.
- No smoking in the workplace or have designated smoking areas.
- Have a fire watch whenever there is any hot work being conducted.

Have Emergency Plans in Place in the Event of a Fire

- Develop an emergency plan for fire and perform regular drills.
- Know the locations of the fire-fighting equipment.
- Make a floor plan showing at least two possible exits and post plan.
- Develop methods of notifying other employees.
- Keep away from smoke, heat, and gasses to increase available escape time.
- Designate a safe meeting area (muster location) and do not re-enter a burning building.
- Remember to call the fire department (911).

Know How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

Follow the '**PASS**' method:

- **Pull** the pin.
- **Aim** the extinguisher at the base of the flame.
- **Squeeze** the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright.
- **Sweep** the extinguisher from side to side, covering the base of the fire with the extinguishing agent.