



UTILITY MANAGEMENT GAS CANISTERS & CYLINDERS

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

This good practice guidance is focused on key controls for any container holding pressurised gas (or other flammable substance) such as canisters and cylinders. These containers of pressurised flammable substances constitute a higher risk at any site, particularly when the container is exposed to a significant heat source. When exposed to a heat source these containers are likely to explode with very serious consequences. Gas canisters and cylinders should always be managed and controlled .

KEY CONTROLS

The key controls are:

1. The precise location of the normal storage position of all gas canisters and cylinders should be clearly identified on the site “fire plan”.
Note – a “Fire plan” is normally a site diagram pointing the key areas of control from a fire risk perspective.
2. No gas canister or cylinder should be stored at any high-risk area of the site (i.e. boiler or compressor areas).
3. It is good practice to prohibit / avoid welding using Acetylene. If unavoidable, Acetylene cylinders (i.e. used as part of an oxygen and acetylene set for welding) should be individually marked on the site “fire plan”. This is because Acetylene is a unique risk; once these cylinders are exposed to any significant heat exposure, they are known to explode after a while. This may still be the case despite removing the heat exposure and attempting a cooling down process.
4. Allocated storage area for gas canister and cylinders should be controlled as follows:
 - a. Located in an external area but not where it can be exposed to other risks (i.e. unplanned contact with a vehicle). Only a working amount should be taken out from the storage when needed for any work activity.

- b. The location needs to have a roof and prevent direct exposure to sunlight
 - c. The location must be secure with authorised access only
 - d. The location needs to be clearly marked with the hazard signs and appropriately signed
 - e. The location should be well vented
 - f. The location should not have any underground area or drains within it or in near vicinity
 - g. The material safety data sheet for each gas/substance should be held in the storage location.
5. Any gas canister or cylinder that are permanently based in the working environment (i.e. gas canisters used for boiler start up) should always be protected from damage and subject to an ongoing housekeeping programme.
6. Any delivery, storage, transporting, use or handling of any gas canister or cylinder should be appropriately risk assessed and managed.



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