

# TOOL BOX TALKS

## Torch Applied Roofing

Hot roofing can be very hazardous to roofers and the public as well. Roofers are exposed to a myriad of hazards on a daily basis including burns, fire and fumes. Torching operations can expose workers to temperatures of 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit! Temperatures applied to roofing materials can also start hidden fires that can eventually lead to a full-blown building fire. Remember the following tips when using hot, torch-application processes.

## WORKSAFE TIPS

### EXPOSURES

- Burns from fire
- Burns from hot roofing materials
- Dehydration from exposure to heat
- Inhalation hazards from asphalt fumes
- Falls from roofs

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Wear protective boots, not tennis shoes
- Wear hard hat
- Wear eye protection
- Wear gloves
- Wear cotton or wool, flame resistant clothes
- Do not wear synthetic clothing

### COMBUSTIBLES ON ROOF

- Clear roof of combustibles to prevent fire
- Waste plastic and paper wrap
- Stacks or piles of lumber or wood waste
- Solvents or cleaners
- Remove what items can be removed

### FIRE PROTECTION

Have the following equipment ready in case of fire:

- Fire extinguisher of the ABC type
- Place fire extinguisher every 20 feet
- Know fire evacuation routes

### FIRE WATCH

After torch operations provide a fire watch

- Shut down torches 3 hours before end of day
- Fire watch must stay 3 hours after operation
- Inspect interior of facility for fire
- Check the roof often for hot spots

### BEST PRACTICES

- Inspect torch equipment before use
- Inspect torch fittings before use— look for crossed threads at connections, damaged hoses or valves that don't turn off.
- Compressed gas cylinders that are not in use and in storage must be maintained upright and chained to a fixed object to prevent fall over
- Stored gas cylinders must kept with the cap on
- Store compressed gas with the valve off.
- Inspect hoses for cuts, damage or excessive wear.
- Inspect gas equipment for leaks, damage, or cracks.
- Remove all leaking equipment from service.
- Tag all equipment out of service when damage is discovered or repairs are needed.
- Destroy gas equipment that cannot be repaired – prevent others from using it.
- Always store torch equipment in protective cases when not in use: Wear from storage can result in cracks, leaks and fire.
- Stay a minimum of 3-4 feet from the flame
- Use the torch head legs to support an active (ignited) torch—don't lean an active-fire torch head on anything—it must be pointed up.
- When shutting down torches, shut off the bottle and let the propane bleed out of the line.
- Disconnect hoses after use at end of the day
- Beware of torching in the following areas as the building can catch fire:
  - Flashings or behind counter-flashings
  - Corners
  - Insulation or wood
  - Lint exhaust
  - Pipes, air vents or HVAC units
  - Gas or electrical lines



*These advisory materials have been developed from national standards and sources believed to be reliable, however, no guarantee is made as to the sufficiency of the information contained in the material and Missouri Employers Mutual Insurance Company assumes no liability for its use. Advice about specific situations should be obtained from a safety professional.*

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