



Fire Watch

Applicable OSHA Compliance Information:

- 29 CFR 1910.252(a)(2)(iii)(A) - Welding, Cutting and Brazing
- 29 CFR 1915.504(a) - Fire Watches

Safety / Compliance Tips

When materials or equipment that may catch on fire can't be moved out of a hot work area, precautions must be taken to prevent the objects from ignition sources. Protection of materials may be achieved by using a fire retardant covering or a fire watch. Fire watch personnel also monitor hot work areas to identify and extinguish small fires that may break out during hot work operations.

For employees performing fire watch activities, a written policy must be created and maintained specifying:

- Each employee must be provided training, including detailed fire watch requirements.
- Duties to be performed.
- Equipment to be used.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) required to be made available and worn.

Fire Watch

Safety / Compliance Tips (Cont'd)

A fire watch must be posted during hot work when any of the following conditions are present:

- Slag, weld splatter, or sparks might pass through an opening and cause a fire.
- Fire-resistant guards or curtains are not used to prevent ignition of combustible materials on or near decks, bulkheads, partitions, or overheads.
- Combustible material closer than 35 feet to the hot work cannot be removed, protected with flame-proof covers, or shielded with metal or fire-resistant guards or curtains.
- Hot work is performed on or near insulation, combustible coatings, or sandwich-type construction that cannot be shielded, cut back, or removed, or in a space within a sandwich type construction that cannot be inerted.
- Combustible materials adjacent to the opposite sides of bulkheads, decks, overheads, metal partitions, or sandwich-type construction may be ignited by conduction or radiation.
- Hot work is close enough to cause ignition through heat radiation or conduction on:
 - Insulated pipes, bulkheads, decks, partitions, or overheads.
 - Combustible materials and/or coatings.
 - Work is close enough to unprotected combustible pipe or cable runs to cause ignition.
 - A Marine Chemist, a Coast Guard-authorized person, or a Shipyard Competent Person requires that a fire watch be posted.

A fire watch must:

- Have a clear view of and immediate access to all areas included in the fire watch.
- Be able to communicate with workers exposed to hot work.
- Be authorized to stop work if necessary and restore safe conditions within the hot work area.
- Remain in the hot work area for at least 30 minutes after completion of the hot work unless the employer or its representative surveys the exposed area and makes a determination that there is no further fire hazard.
- Be trained to detect fires that occur in areas exposed to the hot work.
- Not be assigned to other duties while hot work is in progress.

A fire watch must:

- Attempt to extinguish any incipient stage fires in the hot work area that are within the capability of available equipment and within the fire watch's training qualifications.
- Alert employees of any fire beyond the incipient stage.
- Activate the alarm if unable to extinguish fire in the areas exposed to the hot work.
- Be physically capable of performing fire watch duties.



*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC OR IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS,
PLEASE CONTACT THE AEU LOSS CONTROL STAFF 866-AEU-8754*

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