

Hot work: watch where heat and sparks travel

Talk 22 of 52 | Week 22 | Daily jobsite safety

Leader: adapt this talk to today's electrical work and site procedures. See the educational-use and liability notice on page 2.

START THE CONVERSATION

An electrical installation needs a support modified near stored packaging and an open wall cavity. The work plan must consider where heat or sparks could go, including areas the operator cannot directly see.

KEY TALKING POINTS

1. Follow the site's hot-work authorization and fire-prevention procedure for the operation. Identify combustible materials and address them before work begins. Where hazards cannot be removed, the responsible person must establish suitable protection and controls.
2. For construction welding, cutting, or heating, additional fire-watch personnel are required when ordinary precautions are insufficient. The necessary watch continues for a sufficient period after the work. Do not guess a universal time or let the operator casually dismiss the watch.
3. Electrical job example: sparks from modifying a support can reach another level or the opposite side of a partition. Walk the surrounding area with the responsible person and coordinate with other trades before treating the immediate work surface as the only concern.
4. Ask whether a different fabrication method or location can avoid the exposure. Preparing components in an approved work area may be more practical than protecting a crowded installation area. The supervisor should approve the method and equipment rather than leaving the decision to an improvised setup.
5. Identify who maintains access control, who observes affected areas, and how the work will be stopped if conditions change. A fire watch must understand the assigned responsibility and should not be distracted by unrelated production tasks.
6. Confirm the alarm, evacuation, and response arrangements. Required fire equipment must be accessible, and only appropriately trained and authorized personnel should attempt its use. A nearby extinguisher is not permission for every worker to fight a fire.
7. Plan closeout before starting. Discuss inspection of the affected areas, the required watch, and who releases the work area under the site procedure. Leaving the location immediately after the last cut can miss heat or smoldering material outside the operator's view.

ASK THE CREW

1. Where could sparks or heat reach outside our direct view?
2. Who controls the watch and closeout?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

Confirm the approved work method, area preparation, fire-watch needs, and response plan before hot work.

OSHA SOURCES / FURTHER READING

OSHA 1926.352: Construction fire prevention

Attendance & action record

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Date: _____ Leader: _____

Company / jobsite: _____

Site hazards and controls discussed:

Follow-up action / responsible person / due date:

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Participant name	Signature / acknowledgment

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