

FIRE PREVENTION

In order for a fire to occur, three elements are required:

1. Oxygen to sustain combustion
2. Heat to raise the material to its ignition temperature
3. Fuel or combustible materials.

These elements are frequently shown as the "fire triangle". All sides of the triangle must come together before a fire can occur. The goal of a fire safety program is to keep these elements apart.

Oxygen generally is present in the industrial environment although on a small scale we can eliminate it. Oxygen is controlled by:

- ☐ Place combustible scraps, debris or waste such as oily rags into airtight containers for either disposal or storage.
- ☐ Close doors and windows in the event of a structure fire.
- ☐ Leave the hood closed in the event of an engine fire in a vehicle.

Heat can be controlled by such measures as:

- ☐ Use only approved containers to extinguish smoking materials and only smoking in designated areas.
- ☐ On a daily basis, inspect the electrical outlets, electrical cords, machines and equipment which you use in your work area. Ensure all are in proper working order and free from defects before using.
- ☐ Do not use an electrical extension cord in place of fixed electrical outlets. An extension cord is to be used on a temporary basis only.
- ☐ Do not overload electrical circuits.
- ☐ Follow all procedures for performing hot work.
- ☐ Ensure that materials are stacked to avoid contact with lights or other heat sources.

Fuel or combustible materials are more of a problem for most of us since a vast majority of our buildings and products are composed of combustible materials. There are some combustible materials that we can control such as:

- ☐ Storing pallets outside and away from the building.
- ☐ Empty trash containers regularly.
- ☐ Dispose of shrink wrap so it does not caught in machinery.
- ☐ Store flammable liquids in fire lockers in closed containers.
- ☐ Store LP tanks outside in a cage away from sunshine and out of the way of moving machinery.

It is the responsibility of all individuals to be on the lookout for fire hazards and either immediately correct them or report them to management.

This Toolbox Talk provides general guidelines for voluntary use by employers and is not intended to provide all necessary safety information and precautions for specific workplace operations and situations. The American Supply Association assumes no responsibility or liability for the use of the information provided.

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