

# Arc Welding Safely

Welders shall follow safe welding practices • Employers shall provide safe working conditions and safety training

As in most trades, welders are exposed to certain hazards. Hazards exist with all arc welding processes. Welding is safe when safe practices are followed.

This information is a brief outline of precautionary measures that will help avoid the hazards of arc welding.

Read and understand the manufacturer's instructions and your employer's safe practices.

Your Safety Director or Supervisor should be consulted when specific questions arise.



## WARNING:

PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS.  
READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS BOOKLET.



## fumes and gases can be dangerous to your health

- KEEP your head out of the fumes.
- DON'T get too close to the arc. Use corrective lenses if necessary to stay a reasonable distance away from the arc.
- READ and obey the warning label that appears on all containers of welding materials.

USE ENOUGH VENTILATION or exhaust at the arc, or both, to keep the fumes and gases from your breathing zone and the general area.

IN A LARGE ROOM OR OUTDOORS, natural ventilation may be adequate if you keep your head out of the fumes (See below).

USE NATURAL DRAFTS or fans to keep the fumes away from your face.

If you develop unusual symptoms, see your supervisor. Perhaps the welding atmosphere and ventilation system should be checked.



## some ventilation suggestions

- BE SURE adequate ventilation is available when welding in confined areas or where there are barriers to air movement.
- SMOKE EXTRACTOR welding gun. For semiautomatic welding processes, equipment exists for exhausting the fumes at the arc.



## wear correct eye, ear, and body protection

PROTECT your eyes and face with welding helmet properly fitted and with proper grade of filter plate (See ANSI Z49.1).

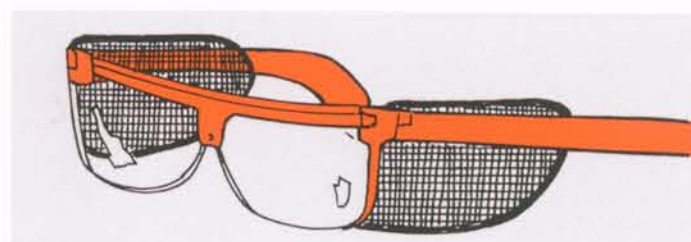
PROTECT your body from welding spatter and arc flash with protective clothing including woolen clothing, flame-proof apron and gloves, leather leggings, and high boots.

PROTECT others from spatter, flash, and glare with protective screens or barriers.

IN SOME AREAS, protection from noise may be appropriate.

BE SURE protective equipment is in good condition.

Also, wear safety glasses in work area AT ALL TIMES.



## special situations

- DO NOT WELD OR CUT containers or materials which previously had been in contact with hazardous substances unless they are properly cleaned. This is extremely dangerous.
- DO NOT WELD OR CUT painted or plated parts unless special precautions with ventilation have been taken. They can release highly toxic fumes or gases.

Refer to the references shown below for directions on how to deal with such special situations.

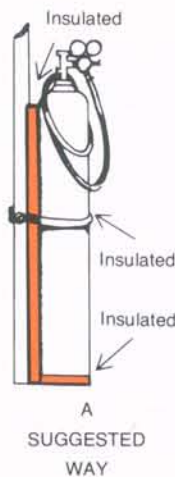
For further information refer to American National Standard Z49.1, "Safety in Welding and Cutting," available from the American Welding Society, P.O. Box 351040, Miami, FL 33135.

Other details are in Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1910 (Occupational Safety and Health Administration Document 2206), available from U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210 and the booklet "TLV's, Threshold Limit Values . . ." American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, P.O. Box 1937, Cincinnati, OH 45201.

## DO NOT TOUCH LIVE ELECTRICAL PARTS electric shock can kill

- BE SURE you are insulated from live electrical parts.
- BE SURE equipment is adequate for the job.
- BE SURE equipment is installed according to prevailing codes.
- BE SURE damaged parts are repaired or replaced.
- BE SURE welding machine is properly grounded.
- BE SURE gloves have no holes.
- BE SURE to stay dry; do not weld when you are wet.
- BE SURE equipment is turned OFF when not in use.
- DO NOT use cables that are too small, damaged, or poorly spliced.
- DO NOT wrap cables around your body.

## additional precautionary measures



PROTECT compressed gas cylinders from excessive heat, mechanical shocks, and arcs; fasten cylinders so they cannot fall.

BE SURE cylinders are never grounded or part of an electrical circuit.

REMOVE all potential fire hazards from welding area.

ALWAYS HAVE FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT READY FOR IMMEDIATE USE AND KNOW HOW TO USE IT.



## cooperating for safety

Cooperation between management and employees is vital to the success of every company. By working together toward the common goal — SAFETY IN WELDING — everyone wins!

Welders and their supervisors should have adequate safety training.



AMERICAN WELDING SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 351040, Miami, FL 33125

## WARNING

### ! CALIFORNIA PROPOSITION !

Diesel engine exhaust and some of its constituents are known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive harm.

#### The Above For Diesel Engines

The engine exhaust from this product contains chemicals known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm.

#### The Above For Gasoline Engines

**ARC WELDING CAN BE HAZARDOUS. PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM POSSIBLE SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH. KEEP CHILDREN AWAY. PACEMAKER WEARERS SHOULD CONSULT WITH THEIR DOCTOR BEFORE OPERATING.**

Read and understand the following safety highlights. For additional safety information, it is strongly recommended that you purchase a copy of "Safety in Welding & Cutting - ANSI Standard Z49.1" from the American Welding Society, P.O. Box 351040, Miami, Florida 33135 or CSA Standard W117.2-1974. A Free copy of "Arc Welding Safety" booklet E205 is available from the Lincoln Electric Company, 22801 St. Clair Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44117-1199.

**BE SURE THAT ALL INSTALLATION, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR PROCEDURES ARE PERFORMED ONLY BY QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.**



### FOR ENGINE powered equipment.

1.a. Turn the engine off before troubleshooting and maintenance work unless the maintenance work requires it to be running.



1.b. Operate engines in open, well-ventilated areas or vent the engine exhaust fumes outdoors.



1.c. Do not add the fuel near an open flame welding arc or when the engine is running. Stop the engine and allow it to cool before refueling to prevent spilled fuel from vaporizing on contact with hot engine parts and igniting. Do not spill fuel when filling tank. If fuel is spilled, wipe it up and do not start engine until fumes have been eliminated.



1.d. Keep all equipment safety guards, covers and devices in position and in good repair. Keep hands, hair, clothing and tools away from V-belts, gears, fans and all other moving parts when starting, operating or repairing equipment.

1.e. In some cases it may be necessary to remove safety guards to perform required maintenance. Remove guards only when necessary and replace them when the maintenance requiring their removal is complete. Always use the greatest care when working near moving parts.

1.f. Do not put your hands near the engine fan. Do not attempt to override the governor or idler by pushing on the throttle control rods while the engine is running.

1.g. To prevent accidentally starting gasoline engines while turning the engine or welding generator during maintenance work, disconnect the spark plug wires, distributor cap or magneto wire as appropriate.



1.h. To avoid scalding, do not remove the radiator pressure cap when the engine is hot.

2.d. All welders should use the following procedures in order to minimize exposure to EMF fields from the welding circuit:

2.d.1. Route the electrode and work cables together - Secure them with tape when possible.

2.d.2. Never coil the electrode lead around your body.

2.d.3. Do not place your body between the electrode and work cables. If the electrode cable is on your right side, the work cable should also be on your right side.

2.d.4. Connect the work cable to the workpiece as close as possible to the area being welded.

2.d.5. Do not work next to welding power source.



### ELECTRIC SHOCK can kill.

3.a. The electrode and work (or ground) circuits are electrically "hot" when the welder is on. Do not touch these "hot" parts with your bare skin or wet clothing. Wear dry, hole-free gloves to insulate hands.

3.b. Insulate yourself from work and ground using dry insulation. Make certain the insulation is large enough to cover your full area of physical contact with work and ground.

**In addition to the normal safety precautions, if welding must be performed under electrically hazardous conditions (in damp locations or while wearing wet clothing; on metal structures such as floors, gratings or scaffolds; when in cramped positions such as sitting, kneeling or lying, if there is a high risk of unavoidable or accidental contact with the workpiece or ground) use the following equipment:**

- Semiautomatic DC Constant Voltage (Wire) Welder.
- DC Manual (Stick) Welder.
- AC Welder with Reduced Voltage Control.

3.c. In semiautomatic or automatic wire welding, the electrode, electrode reel, welding head, nozzle or semiautomatic welding gun are also electrically "hot".

3.d. Always be sure the work cable makes a good electrical connection with the metal being welded. The connection should be as close as possible to the area being welded.

3.e. Ground the work or metal to be welded to a good electrical (earth) ground.

3.f. Maintain the electrode holder, work clamp, welding cable and welding machine in good, safe operating condition. Replace damaged insulation.

3.g. Never dip the electrode in water for cooling.

3.h. Never simultaneously touch electrically "hot" parts of electrode holders connected to two welders because voltage between the two can be the total of the open circuit voltage of both welders.

3.i. When working above floor level, use a safety belt to protect yourself from a fall should you get a shock.

3.j. Also see Items 6.c. and 8.



### ARC RAYS can burn.

4.a. Use a shield with the proper filter and cover plates to protect your eyes from sparks and the rays of the arc when welding or observing open arc welding. Headshield and filter lens should conform to ANSI Z87.1 standards.

4.b. Use suitable clothing made from durable flame-resistant material to protect your skin and that of your helpers from the arc rays.

4.c. Protect other nearby personnel with suitable, non-flammable screening and/or warn them not to watch the arc nor expose themselves to the arc rays or to hot spatter or metal.



### FUMES AND GASES can be dangerous.

5.a. Welding may produce fumes and gases hazardous to health. Avoid breathing these fumes and gases. When welding, keep your head out of the fume. Use enough ventilation and/or exhaust at the arc to keep fumes and gases away from the breathing zone. **When welding with electrodes which require special ventilation such as stainless or hard facing (see instructions on container or MSDS) or on lead or cadmium plated steel and other metals or coatings which produce highly toxic fumes, keep exposure as low as possible and below Threshold Limit Values (TLV) using local exhaust or mechanical ventilation. In confined spaces or in some circumstances, outdoors, a respirator may be required. Additional precautions are also required when welding on galvanized steel.**

5.b. Do not weld in locations near chlorinated hydrocarbon vapors coming from degreasing, cleaning or spraying operations. The heat and rays of the arc can react with solvent vapors to form phosgene, a highly toxic gas, and other irritating products.

5.c. Shielding gases used for arc welding can displace air and cause injury or death. Always use enough ventilation, especially in confined areas, to insure breathing air is safe.

5.d. Read and understand the manufacturer's instructions for this equipment and the consumables to be used, including the material safety data sheet (MSDS) and follow your employer's safety practices. MSDS forms are available from your welding distributor or from the manufacturer.

5.e. Also see item 1.b.



### WELDING SPARKS can cause fire or explosion.

6.a. Remove fire hazards from the welding area. If this is not possible, cover them to prevent the welding sparks from starting a fire. Remember that welding sparks and hot materials from welding can easily go through small cracks and openings to adjacent areas. Avoid welding near hydraulic lines. Have a fire extinguisher readily available.

6.b. Where compressed gases are to be used at the job site, special precautions should be used to prevent hazardous situations. Refer to "Safety in Welding and Cutting" (ANSI Standard Z49.1) and the operating information for the equipment being used.

6.c. When not welding, make certain no part of the electrode circuit is touching the work or ground. Accidental contact can cause overheating and create a fire hazard.

6.d. Do not heat, cut or weld tanks, drums or containers until the proper steps have been taken to insure that such procedures will not cause flammable or toxic vapors from substances inside. They can cause an explosion even though they have been "cleaned". For information, purchase "Recommended Safe Practices for the Preparation for Welding and Cutting of Containers and Piping That Have Held Hazardous Substances", AWS F4.1 from the American Welding Society (see address above).

6.e. Vent hollow castings or containers before heating, cutting or welding. They may explode.

6.f. Sparks and spatter are thrown from the welding arc. Wear oil free protective garments such as leather gloves, heavy shirt, cuffless trousers, high shoes and a cap over your hair. Wear ear plugs when welding out of position or in confined places. Always wear safety glasses with side shields when in a welding area.

6.g. Connect the work cable to the work as close to the welding area as practical. Work cables connected to the building framework or other locations away from the welding area increase the possibility of the welding current passing through lifting chains, crane cables or other alternate circuits. This can create fire hazards or overheat lifting chains or cables until they fail.

6.h. Also see item 1.c.



### CYLINDER may explode if damaged.

7.a. Use only compressed gas cylinders containing the correct shielding gas for the process used and properly operating regulators designed for the gas and pressure used. All hoses, fittings, etc. should be suitable for the application and maintained in good condition.

7.b. Always keep cylinders in an upright position securely chained to an undercarriage or fixed support.

7.c. Cylinders should be located:

- Away from areas where they may be struck or subjected to physical damage.

• A safe distance from arc welding or cutting operations and any other source of heat, sparks, or flame.

7.d. Never allow the electrode, electrode holder or any other electrically "hot" parts to touch a cylinder.

7.e. Keep your head and face away from the cylinder valve outlet when opening the cylinder valve.

7.f. Valve protection caps should always be in place and hand tight except when the cylinder is in use or connected for use.

7.g. Read and follow the instructions on compressed gas cylinders, associated equipment, and CGA publication P-1, "Precautions for Safe Handling of Compressed Gases in Cylinders," available from the Compressed Gas Association 1235 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202.



### ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FIELDS may be dangerous

2.a. Electric current flowing through any conductor causes localized Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF). Welding current creates EMF fields around welding cables and welding machines

2.b. EMF fields may interfere with some pacemakers, and welders having a pacemaker should consult their physician before welding.

2.c. Exposure to EMF fields in welding may have other health effects which are now not known.



### FOR ELECTRICALLY powered equipment.

8.a. Turn off input power using the disconnect switch at the fuse box before working on the equipment.

8.b. Install equipment in accordance with the U.S. National Electrical Code, all local codes and the manufacturer's recommendations.

8.c. Ground the equipment in accordance with the U.S. National Electrical Code and the manufacturer's recommendations.