

3.0 WELDING AND GAS CUTTING OPERATIONS

3.1 GAS WELDING:

3.1.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- a. All welders shall be provided with fire resistant protective clothing and equipment, such as fire resistant gauntlets and aprons, helmets and goggles with suitable filter lenses and its usage shall be ensured;
- b. The welders shall not be allowed to wear clothing that is not free from grease, oil and other flammable material;
- c. Adequate precautions shall be taken to protect persons working or passing near welding operations from dangerous sparks and radiation;
- d. When welding or cutting is being done on materials containing toxic or harmful substances or liable to produce toxic or harmful fumes, adequate precautions shall be taken to protect workers from the fumes, either by
 - i) Exhaust ventilation, or
 - ii) Respiratory protective equipment;
 - iii) Arrangement shall be made so that welding sparks do not fall down on the persons working below or material, which are combustible in nature and may be damaged with such sparks.
- e. The oxygen pressure for welding shall always be high enough to prevent acetylene flowing back into the oxygen cylinder;
- f. Acetylene shall not be used for welding at a pressure exceeding 1 atmosphere gauge;
- g. Adequate precautions shall be taken to prevent:
 - i) Fire being started by sparks,
 - ii) Slag or hot metal; and
 - iii) Damage to fibre ropes from heat, sparks, slag or hot metal;
- h. Precautions shall be taken to prevent flammable vapours and substances from entering the working area;

3.2. WELDING AT PLACES WITH FIRE RISKS:

- a. Unless adequate precautions are taken, no welding or cutting operations shall be allowed near the place where combustible materials are stored, or near materials or plant where explosive or flammable dusts, gases or vapours are likely to be present or given off. If hot work permit system exists at the site, the same shall be followed;
- b. Combustible materials and structures that cannot be removed from the vicinity of welding operations shall be shielded by asbestos or protected by other suitable means.

3.3. WELDING IN CONFINED SPACE:

When welding or cutting operations are being carried out in a confined space;

- a. Adequate ventilation, by means of exhaust fans or forced draught as the condition may require, shall be constantly provided; otherwise enough quantity of air shall be blown in by means of compressors to dilute the pollutants;

- b. No blow pipe shall be left unattended inside a tank or vessel or other confined space during meal break or other interruption of the work;
- c. The worker shall take all necessary precautions to prevent unburned combustible gas or oxygen from escaping inside a tank or vessel or other confined space; and
- d. When necessary to prevent danger, an attendant shall watch the welders from outside.

3.4. WELDING ON CONTAINERS FOR EXPLOSIVE OR FLAMMABLE SUBSTANCES:

Welding or cutting operations on containers in which they are explosives or flammable substances shall not be allowed;

- i) Welding or cutting operations on any container that has held explosive or where flammable gases may have been generated, shall only be undertaken,
- ii) After the container has been thoroughly cleansed by steam or other effective means; and
- iii) Found by air tests to be completely free from combustible gases and vapours; or
- iv) After the combustible gas in the container has been completely replaced by an inert gas or by water;
- v) If an inert gas is used as laid down in clause 4.2.3, after the vessel has been filled with gas, the gas shall continue to flow slowly into it thorough out the welding or cutting operations;
- vi) Before starting any welding operations on, or otherwise applying heat to, closed or jacketed containers or other hollow parts, such containers or parts shall be adequately vented in suitable manner.

3.5. GAS CYLINDERS

- a. Gas cylinders shall be inspected, stored, handled and transported in conformity with the requirements of Gas Cylinders Rules, 1981;
- b. When in use, cylinders shall be held in upright positions by straps, collars or chains;
- c. Devices referred to in clause 6.2 shall be such that the cylinders can be rapidly removed in an emergency;
- d. Welders shall not temper with or attempt to repair safety devices and valves on gas cylinders;
- e. When acetylene cylinders are coupled, flash back arrestor shall be inserted between the cylinder and the coupler block, or between the coupler block and the regulator;
- f. Only acetylene cylinders or approximately equal pressure shall be coupled;
- g. No gas shall be taken from a cylinder unless a pressure reducing regulator has been attached to the valve;
- h. Only the right pressure reducing regulator shall be used for the gas in the cylinder;
- i. Cylinder valves shall be kept free from gases, grease, oil, dusts and dirt;
- j. Leaky cylinders charged with acetylene or liquefied fuel gas shall be taken into the open air at a safe distance from any open flame or sparks.

3.6 HOSE

- a. Only hose especially designed for welding and cutting operations shall be used to connect an oxy-acetylene torch to gas outlet;
- b. Hose lines for oxygen and for oxy-acetylene shall be of different colours and preferably of different size;
- c. Hose connections shall be sufficiently light to withstand without leakage a pressure twice the maximum delivery pressure of the pressure regulators in the system;

- d. Care shall be taken that hose does not become kinked or tangled, stepped on or run-over or otherwise damaged;
- e. Any length of hose in which a flashback has burned, shall be discarded;
- f. No hose with more than one gas passage shall be used;
- g. Only soapy water shall be used for testing hose for leaks.

3.7. TROCHES

- a. When torches are being changed, the gases shall be shut off at the pressure reducing regulators and not by crimping hose;
- b. Torches shall be lit with friction lighters or other safe source but not with matches.
- c. Electric welding equipment:
- d. Welding machines shall be controlled by a switch mounted on or near the machine framework that, when opened, immediately cuts off the power from all conductors supplying the machine;
- e. Welding circuit shall be so designed as to prevent the transmission of high potential from the source of supply to the welding electrodes;
- f. The maximum open circuit voltage shall be in accordance with Indian Standards;
- g. Electrode conductors or cables shall not be excessive in length and shall not be longer than necessary to perform the work;
- h. Return conductors shall be taken directly to work and securely connected mechanically and electrically to it or to the work bench, floor etc. and to an adjacent metallic object;
- i. Cable shall be supported so as not to create dangerous obstruction;
- j. Motors, generators, rectifiers and transformers in arc welding or cutting machines, and all current carrying parts, shall be protected against accidental contact with uninsulated live parts;
- k. Ventilating slots in transformer enclosures shall be so designed that no live part is accessible through any slot;
- l. Frames of arc welding machines shall be effectively earthed;
- m. In hand-operated arc welding machines, cables and cable connectors used in arc welding circuits shall be effectively insulated on the supply side;
- n. The outer surface electrode holders of hand-operated arc welding machines, including the jaw so far as practicable, shall be effectively insulated;
- o. Electrode holders of hand-operated arc-welding machines shall, if practicable, be provided with discs or shields to protect the operator's hands from the heat of the arcs;
- p. Only heavy-duty cable with unbroken insulation shall be used;
- q. Circuit connections shall be waterproof;
- r. When lengths of cable have to be joined, only insulated connectors shall be used on the earth line and the electrode holder line;
- s. Connections to welding terminals shall be made at distribution boxes, socket outlets, etc. by bolted joints;
- t. Welding terminals shall be adequately protected against accidental contact by enclosures, covers or other effective means;
- u. Electrode holder shall
 - i. Have adequate current capacity;
 - ii. Be adequately insulated to prevent shock, short-circuiting or flashovers.