

Work Health and Safety Guidance Note

Flammable clothing – are you safe?

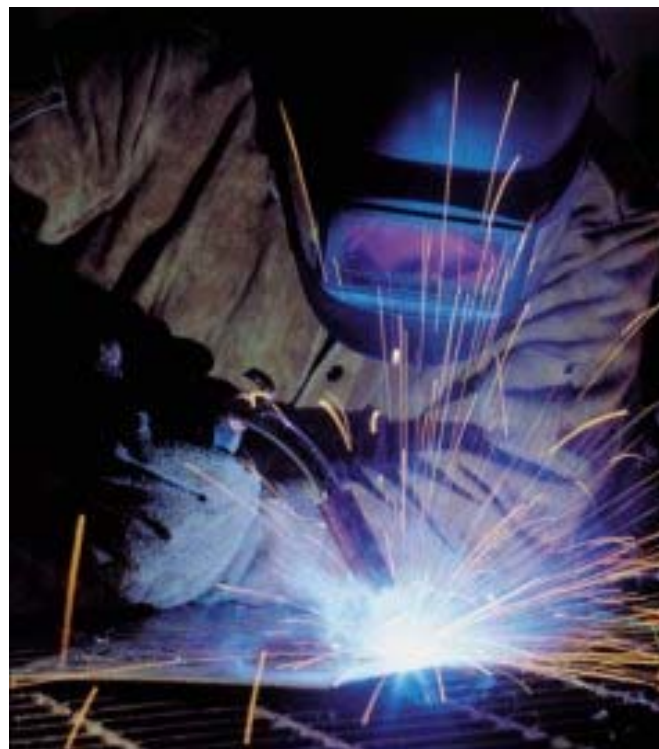
A worker was seriously burned after his clothing caught fire while using a welder.

A welding spark burned through the workers personal protective equipment (PPE) and ignited his polyester tee shirt.

At the time of this incident the worker was wearing the correct PPE for the task.

Burns from clothing fires can cause serious injury and death.

A key requirement of the Workplace Health and Safety Regulations is to ensure that hazards are identified and risk assessed. This requirement includes identifying the hazards and assessing the risks of clothing while working with and around possible ignition points such as open flames, sparks, excessive heat sources and electricity are some of the factors that must be taken into account when selecting the clothing a worker wears.



Risk Controls

The following points are some of the possible solutions and actions a workplace can take to eliminate any possible burns to workers.

- Ensure that workers wear flame resistant clothing and under garments.
- Ensure that suitable fire fighting equipment is available while performing tasks around ignition points.
- Provide appropriate first aid resources and personnel to ensure that burns are treated promptly and correctly.
- Remove from the work area any other possible ignition points such as flammable substances and materials.
- Ask the clothing manufacturer or supplier if clothing is fire resistant and suitable for the tasks a worker performs.
- Follow the safety requirements of the manufacturer or supplier of the equipment or machinery being used.

Contact Us

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More Information

The following publications may assist with the hazard identification and risk assessment process and are available online at www.wst.tas.gov.au or by calling our Helpline on 1300 366 322.

- **A guide to the workplace health and safety legislation (GBI33)** - provides an overview of the workplace health and safety legislation in Tasmania. This guide explains the rights and responsibilities of different people in the workplace. It also explains the roles of WorkCover Tasmania and Workplace Standards Tasmania.
- **Hazard management – Play it SAFE (GB 081)** – describes how to apply the SAFE steps to risk control in your workplace.
- **Making your small business safer and healthier (GBI48)** - offers practical guidance for small business employers and managers
- **Reducing the risk of eye injuries (SB037)** - provides practical guidance on reducing eye hazards, and selecting the appropriate type of personal eye protection. Deals specifically with welding, lasers,