

## Tool Box Talk – Shielded Metal Arc Welding Hazards

- There are several hazards associated with shielded metal arc welding, including radiation from the arc, molten metal, welding fumes, and electrical current.
- Wear approved flame resistant clothing and work boots. Shirts should have long sleeves and should not have pockets. Also, wear long pants without cuffs and use appropriate welding gloves.
- Make sure you have a welding helmet with the proper shade of lens and use a welding screen to shield the eyes of others. In general, recommended shades for lenses based on welding current are:
  - Shade #10 – 75 A to 200 A
  - Shade #12 – 200 A to 400 A and
  - Shade #14 – Over 400 A
- Always wear safety glasses under your welding helmet.
- Make sure you have plenty of ventilation in your work area. Point-of-operation ventilation is ideal, but local ventilation works well too.
- Clear the area of any flammable/combustible substances and materials.
- Make sure you have a fully charged, recently inspected Class ABC fire extinguisher in your immediate work area.
- Carefully inspect your welding leads each time before you start work. Look over the full length of the leads, checking the insulation for cuts, abrasions, or any other type of damage.
- Also, inspect the electrode holder. Make sure there is no visible damage and ensure that the jaws are properly insulated.
- If you find damage to any of the welding equipment, don't use it. Immediately follow your company's procedures for taking defective equipment out of service.