

Tool BoxTalk # 1 – Welding Hazards

- There are a significant number of occupational injuries from welding operations each year.
- Hazards from welding include electrocutions, eye damage, burns, toxic inhalants, and fire. If you are welding or working around welding operations be aware of these hazards.
- One of the worst hazards from welding is the potential for electrocution. Be sure to insulate yourself from the work, the electrode, and the electrode holder. Avoid becoming grounded.
- To protect your eyes from ultraviolet and infrared radiation burns, put on proper eye protection before looking at an arc even for an instant.
- Different shades of filter plates can be attached to welding helmets. The shade needed depends on the type of welding, size of the electrode, and the amount of electrical current. Check with your electrode supplier for the appropriate shade needed. If you are in doubt, use a #10 shade.
- If possible, isolate your work area to keep other workers from looking at the arc. Use a flame resistant welding screen whenever possible.
- Wear flash goggles with side shields under your helmet to protect your eyes from slag fragments and other flying particles.
- Wear clothing that will protect your body from hot sparks such as flame resistant coveralls, welding gloves, flame resistant leggings, and leather high top boots. Choose clothes that don't have pockets or cuffs in the legs or sleeves.
- Make sure your work area is well ventilated to protect you from inhalation hazards. If your work area can't be properly ventilated, you may need respiratory protection. Check with your supervisor before proceeding.
- Keep at least one Class ABC fire extinguisher readily accessible.
- Stop work at least ½ hour before leaving the site and check the welding area for smoldering materials.