



Welding & Cutting Standards

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Welding, cutting, and brazing are hazardous activities that pose a unique combination of both safety and health risks to over 500,000 workers in a wide variety of industries. The risk from fatal injuries alone is more than four deaths per thousand workers over a working lifetime.

Even in metal cutting or repair jobs that are considered routine, workers should always follow established safety procedures and resist the temptation to take short-cuts. There are three basic types of welding operations:

- Oxygen-fuel gas welding joins metal parts by generating extremely high heat during combustion.
- Resistance welding joins metals by generating heat through resistance to electric current.
- Arc welding joins or cuts metal parts by heat generated from an electric arc that extends between the welding electrode and the electrode placed on the equipment being welded.

There are numerous health hazards associated with exposure to fumes, gases, and ionizing radiation formed or released during welding, cutting and brazing, including heavy metal poisoning, lung cancer, metal fume fever, flash burns, and others. These risks vary, depending upon the type of welding materials and welding surfaces.

NIOSH published a Criteria Document, *NIOSH Criteria for a Recommended Standard: Welding, Brazing, and Thermal Cutting* in 1988, recommending that "exposures to all welding emissions be reduced to the lowest feasible concentrations using state-of-the-art engineering controls and work practices."

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NIOSH (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health) has reported that excesses in morbidity and mortality among welders appear to exist even when exposures have been reported to be below current OSHA permissible exposure limits (PELs), for the many individual components of welding emissions.

Training Objectives:

Welding and cutting regulations are found at 29 CFR 1926.350 - .354. Your company must make sure that your welders or cutters and their supervisors are suitably trained in the safe operation of their equipment. In addition, they must make sure that these employees understand the welding process so that they perform their welding tasks safely.

Course Length Approximately 2.0 Hours

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