

SSOW 01: USE OF COMPRESSED GAS CYLINDERS

Issue Number: 07

Date of Issue: 31/01/2026

Based on: RA03

PURPOSE

To ensure compressed gas cylinders are handled, used, transported, and stored safely, preventing injury, fire, explosion, or uncontrolled gas release. This SSOW provides a consistent method for competent personnel to manage pressurised cylinders in accordance with legal requirements, manufacturer guidance, and site controls.

PPE REQUIREMENTS

For this activity, the following PPE must be worn

					
☒	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐
High-vis Vest / Jacket (BS EN 471)	Safety Boots (EN ISO 20345:2011) (S3)	Safety Gloves (Cut resistant) (EN 420:2003)	N/A	N/A	N/A

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- Safe Use, Handling and Storage of Gas Cylinders
- Manual Handling Awareness
- Fire Safety & Use of Fire Extinguishers
- COSHH Awareness

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Compressed gas cylinders
- Mechanical aids (e.g. trolleys)

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK

- Only approved cylinders designed to meet the standards of the Pressure Equipment Regulations 1999 are to be used.
- Cylinders only to be used by competent persons trained in the safe use, handling and storage of pressurised cylinders.
- Use cylinders in a vertical position unless specifically designed to be used otherwise.
- Always double check that the cylinder is the right one for the intended use.
- Close the cylinder valve and replace dust caps where provided when a cylinder is not in use.
- Before connecting a gas cylinder to equipment or pipework make sure that the regulator and pipework are suitable for the type or gas and pressure being used.
- DO NOT use gas cylinders for any other purpose than the transport and storage of gas.
- DO NOT drop gas cylinders.
- Cylinders are to remain vertical and secured in a approved cage or trolley at all times.
- Movement of cylinders in accordance with either a trolley or lifting appliance.
- All mechanical lifting of cylinders is to be carried out by a competent person in accordance with an approved lifting plan. No lifting of cylinders by forklift unless secured in a cage designed for that purpose.
- Inspections of cylinders must be carried out in accordance with an examination scheme.
- Daily pre-use inspections to be carried out by all users.
- Cylinders to be removed to an external storage cage overnight on a daily basis.

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Lifting:

- An approved lifting plan must be in place for all lifting operations.
- Only competent approved personnel are permitted to carry out lifting operations.
- Use of suitable cradles, slings or other effective means when lifting cylinders with a hoist or crane.
- DO NOT use valves, shrouds and caps for lifting cylinders unless they have been designed and manufactured for this purpose.
- Gas cylinders should not be raised or lowered on the forks or a lift truck unless adequate precautions are taken to prevent them from falling

Transport:

- No transportation of compressed cylinders is permitted without authorisation.
- Where transportation is approved, fit suitable protective valve caps and covers to cylinders, when necessary, before transporting. (Note: caps and covers prevent moisture and dirt from gathering in the valve of the cylinder. They also help in preventing gas from leaking).
- Securely stow cylinders to prevent them from moving or falling. This is normally in the vertical position unless instructions for transport state otherwise.
- Disconnect regulators and hoses from cylinders wherever practicable.
- DO NOT let gas cylinders project beyond the sides or end of a vehicle.
- Ensure gas cylinders are clearly marked to show their contents and the hazards associated with their contents.
- It may be necessary to take special measures with certain types and quantities of compressed gases and fluids in order to ensure safe carriage. If you have any doubts STOP and speak to your line manager.

Storage:

- Store gas cylinders in a safe place in open air. If this is not reasonably practicable, then store them in an adequately ventilated building or part of a building specifically reserved for this purpose.
- Cylinders containing flammable gas should not be stored in part of a building used for other purposes.
- Protect gas cylinder from external heat sources which may adversely affect their mechanical integrity.
- Cylinders should be stored away from sources of ignition and other flammable materials.
- Avoid storing gas cylinders so that they stand or lie in water.
- Store gas cylinders securely when they are not in use.
- They should be properly restrained, unless designed to be free-standing.
- Gas cylinders must be clearly marked to show what they contain, and the hazards associated with their contents.

IDENTIFIED RISKS

The SSOW above has been compiled after identifying the following risks from this activity

- Impact from the blast of a cylinder explosion or a rapid release of gas
- Impact from parts of cylinders that fail
- Contact with released gasses
- Fire resulting from the escape of flammable gasses
- Impact from falling cylinders
- Manual handling injuries or musculoskeletal disorders

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REFER TO RISK ASSESSMENT RA03

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