

PSC Safety Fax

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<http://www.pscsafe.com>
P.O. Box 18352
San Antonio, TX 78218
1-800-216-7233
(210) 654-1122
(210) 650-0035-Faxline
E-Mail - psc@pscsafe.com

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Weekly Safety Meeting
"L P GAS SALAMANDER
HEATERS"

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OSHA CITES RED BUD, ILL., FIRM FOR FAILURE TO ABATE SAFETY VIOLATIONS
CHICAGO, Ill. -- Repeated safety violations and failure to abate unsafe working conditions have led to citations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for Total Process Control of Red Bud, Ill. The firm has also received proposed fines of \$58,200. "Safety and health standards are designed to protect workers," said Peggy Zweber, OSHA's area director in Peoria. "This company ran the risk of harming its employees from hazards it had been told to correct after an inspection early in 2002."

OSHA's earlier inspection, which began at Total Process Control on Feb. 2, 2002 in response to a complaint, led to numerous alleged safety and health violations, ranging from unguarded machinery to lack of required safety and health programs. After repeated requests for documentation from the company to show how these problems had been addressed, OSHA began a follow-up inspection on Nov. 21. As a result of the second inspection, the agency has now issued three citations alleging failure to abate safety and health violations from the February inspection and two citations for alleged repeat violations of standards for which the company had been cited previously.

The repeat violations involved a lack of medical evaluations to determine the ability of employees to wear respirators and lack of workplace assessments to determine the proper selection and use of personal protective equipment. The failure to abate violations cited the firm for an inadequate respiratory protection program, lack of portable fire extinguisher training, improper use of fire extinguishers, and lack of hazard communication training for exposed employees.

Repeat violations take place when employers have been cited for substantially similar conditions, and the citations have become final orders of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. Employers can receive "failure to abate" citations when they have not corrected violations by the period of time required in earlier OSHA citations they have received. Total Process Control develops processes for use in the manufacture of process piping, structural steel, electrical controls, and skid mounted pre-assembled modules. **OSHA News Release**

OSHA RECORDKEEPING FORM TO INCLUDE HEARING LOSS IN 2004
MSD DECISIONS DELAYED

WASHINGTON -- Beginning Jan. 1, 2004, employers will be required to check a hearing loss column to record work-related cases meeting the new recording criteria established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The new criteria go into effect in 2003.

"The new recordkeeping standard requires employers to record work-related hearing loss cases when an employee's hearing test shows a marked decrease in overall hearing," said OSHA Administrator John Henshaw. "Data from the new column will improve the nation's statistical information on occupational hearing loss, improve the agency's ability to determine where the injuries occur, and help prioritize hearing loss prevention efforts." Under the new criteria, employers will record 10-decibel shifts from the employee's baseline hearing test when they also result in an overall hearing level of 25 decibels.

OSHA is also postponing for one year three provisions related to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs); the rule's definition of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), consideration of MSDs as privacy concern cases, and requirements to check a MSD columns on the OSHA Log. **OSHA News Release**

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L P GAS SALAMANDER HEATERS

L P gas salamander heaters can be very useful for providing temporary heating on job sites, particularly when the size of location of the site makes other heaters impractical. They are ideal for heating because the salamander is equipped with adjustable valves and regulators making it easier to control the heat source and quantity of gases.

While these heaters can be very helpful to us for heating the work area, it is important that common sense precautions be taken to prevent fires or injuries that could result if they are improperly used.

Most LP gas salamander accidents that occur are fires, usually caused when the units are placed too close to combustible materials (paper, wood, plastics, etc.) or near flammable solvents or paints. Burns are the frequent source of injury, and they often occur when salamanders are placed in the middle of walkways or too close to work areas.

As with any fuel/air heater, there is always a potential for oxygen deficiency and carbon monoxide poisoning in highly confined areas that do not have adequate cross ventilation.

Some good helpful tips for salamanders and other portable heaters are:

1. Always maintain a minimum distance of at least 3 feet from any combustible materials and observe an overhead clearance of at least 6 feet to prevent fires.
2. Tarpaulins, canvas, and plastic coverings have been the major fuel source in many fires started with salamanders, so keep these combustibles at least 10 feet away from any open flame heater.
3. Always be alert for hot surfaces on and around the heater. Don't touch metal parts that could become heated. Even though they don't look hot, they can cause serious burns.
4. Salamanders are designed to be used in a horizontal position. Don't attempt to use them in other positions unless permitted by the manufacturers' instructions.
5. Always follow the instructions when lighting the heater or shutting it down. Don't attempt shortcuts.
6. After lighting the salamander, check to be sure that it is functioning properly. If you feel that it's not working properly, shut it off and tell your supervisor
7. It's a good idea to periodically check a salamander after it is lighted just to be sure that it continues to burn properly. A quick inspection takes very little time and you may prevent an accident.
8. Be very careful when you place a salamander in a confined place. Some of these heaters use up oxygen quickly and generate carbon monoxide vapors. There should always be a source of fresh air when fuel-air heaters are used.
9. When fueling or changing L P tanks follow the manufacturers instructions and be sure the unit is cool to the touch. It's a good idea to check for leaks in fuel lines, hoses or connections.
10. Remember that L P gas is heavier than air. Leaks in cylinders tend to seek the lower level of a room and could move to other areas easily. Be sure that leaks are reported. L P gas cylinders not in use should be properly stored and secured outside, away from the building.