

Tool Box Talk

Fire Prevention On Site

Fire Risk

The risk of fire at a construction site can be higher than when the job is finished. This is because permanent fire protection systems are in different stages of development.

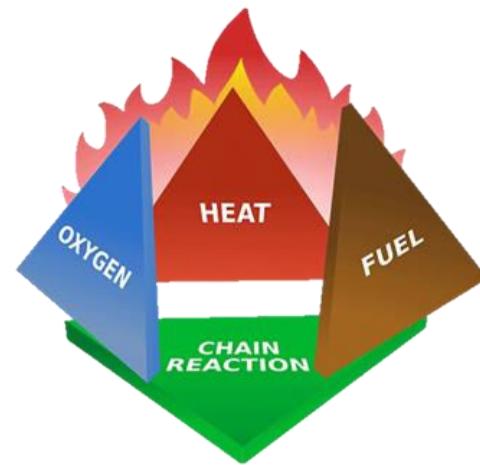
Other measures that control the spread of fires (doors, walls, floors, etc.) are also in different stages of development. This leaves the structure vulnerable.



Preventative Measures

- **Housekeeping** – wood, debris and other construction materials make great fuel for fires. Ensure site conditions are kept clean and tidy.
- **Garbage receptacles** – keep these in a suitable location away from power and heat sources. Ensure the receptacle is suitable for the material being disposed of as well.
- **Temporary or permanent power** – this must be installed and maintained by a qualified electrician.
- **Panel area** – keep clear of debris, material, etc. Emergency termination may be required in the case of a fire.
- **Temporary or permanent heaters** – these generate heat. Different types do different things (radiant heat, open flame, fan, etc.) One thing they have in common is that they create heat, and subsequently can cause fire if placed too close to material and debris.
- **Lighting** – some lights can generate extreme heat. Ensure these types are placed as per the manufacturer's recommendation.
- **Smoking** – the ash of a cigarette, the butts and the open flame to light can create fire. Ensure a no-smoking policy is implemented and enforced inside these structures. Create a designated smoking area.
- **Material storage** – flammable products must be stored in a well-ventilated area, away from incompatible materials. (oxidizers, etc.) Don't store flammables near exits.

- **Hot work** – hot work permits help negate risk from work that produces heat, sparks and/or open flames. The permit categorizes the hazards and the type of work conducted. It minimizes the risk, ensuring the safety of the people in the area.
- **Fire watch** – this step ensures that a fire does not start. There is no better prevention strategy when hot work is conducted.
- **Fire extinguishers** – having these nearby on construction sites can prevent the spread of a small fire. The wrong type can make fire worse or cause harm to the user.
- **Employee training** – workers must be aware of fire hazards. They also need to be trained to detect the risks, use extinguishers and know when to evacuate.



Fire Tetrahedron

A fire needs four elements to burn: oxygen, heat and a chemical chain reaction. If we remove one or more of these elements, fire cannot start, spread or continue to burn.

Fire Safety Plan

OHS Regulation 25-2 (Fire Safety Plan) makes it mandatory for employers and contractors to develop a fire safety plan. This plan must be tested to ensure it works. Worker training must include the plan and its details.