

# Fire Prevention For Contractor's Equipment

Fire has caused severe losses in the construction industry through the damage of valuable construction equipment. The loss of use of this equipment for extended periods, for repairing or obtaining replacements, has delayed contract completion. Often this has resulted in contracts being nullified, or the incurring of penalties for failure to complete work on schedule.

## Management Involvement

It is essential that you, as management, recognize the importance and need to establish a Loss Prevention Program to prevent fire losses to your high value equipment. A Loss Prevention Program can not be successful without your support and active participation.

## Suggestions for controlling preventable fire losses

1. Construction site
  - Water supplies for fire fighting purposes should be made available as soon as possible.
  - Access for emergency equipment to the site should be provided.
  - Employees should be trained in basic fire fighting procedures.
  - Local police and fire departments should be notified of your job site location and requested to increase patrol activity.
  - Reliable watchmen service should be provided.
  - Emergency telephone numbers should be posted near the site telephone.
  - Proper type fire extinguishers should be provided for on site construction equipment.
2. Fueling procedures
  - The main fuel supply should be remote from the work areas, stored in approved tanks, and located on level ground.
  - Approved fire extinguishers, suitable for flammable liquid fires, should be properly mounted nearby.
  - All equipment should be parked, shut down and cool prior to fueling.
  - All ignition sources such as smoking, open flames, etc., should be eliminated. Warning signs should be posted.
  - Fueling should only be transferred by approved pumps or UL listed safety containers.
  - A continuous ground should be maintained between the pump nozzle and the equipment filler pipe.

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- Reserve fuel should not be stored on equipment, except in approved fuel tanks.
  - Fuel spills should be cleaned up immediately by noncombustible absorbing compounds.
3. Hydraulic systems
- If possible, "Flame Resistant" hydraulic fluids should be used, rather than the combustible types.
  - The entire hydraulic systems including reservoirs, pumps and distribution lines, should be protected against external damage.
  - Procedures should be established for daily inspection of hydraulic lines and components for defects.
4. Special conditions
- High value special equipment should be protected with a fixed extinguishing system.
  - When equipment is not in use, it should be stored in the open, with adequate separation from other equipment, buildings, yard storage and fueling areas.
  - Brush and other debris should not be allowed to accumulate under, or around equipment.
5. Maintenance and repair
- Preventive maintenance program should be in effect, with repair records kept current.
  - Equipment repair area should be located away from work, storage and fueling areas.
  - Worn or damaged electrical wiring, cables, fuel or hydraulic lines, etc., should be replaced or repaired immediately.
  - Equipment should be cleaned on a regular basis.
  - Welding and cutting should not be conducted in areas where combustible storage or flammable vapors are present.
  - Fixed and portable fire extinguishing equipment should be tested and serviced as recommended by the manufacturer.

Contact your local Great American Loss Prevention Specialist for additional information.

The loss prevention information and advice presented in this brochure are intended only to advise our insureds and their managers of a variety of methods and strategies based on generally accepted safe practices, for controlling potentially loss producing situations commonly occurring in business premises and/or operations. They are not intended to warrant that all potential hazards or conditions have been evaluated or can be controlled. They are not intended as an offer to write insurance coverage for such conditions or exposures, or to simply that Great American Insurance Company will write such coverage. The liability of Great American Insurance Company is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies issued.  
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