

HAZARD ALERT



WORKER DIES...FIRE EXTINGUISHER NOT READILY AVAILABLE

A New Brunswick electrician died when a fire broke out in a warehouse under construction.

The ignition point of the fire was 10 feet (3 m) up from the ground, at the ceiling level, where a pipe was being welded. The welder was working on a platform elevated by a forklift. When the fire started, he had to slide down the forklift mast to retrieve the fire extinguisher that was 20 feet (6 m) away. By the time he



returned with the extinguisher, the fire had progressed beyond its capacity and the entire warehouse went up in flames. Most workers escaped safely but an electrician was unable to get out and perished in the fire.

The location of the fire extinguisher was not the sole cause of the fatality. However, in other circumstances, access to a readily available fire extinguisher could have helped contain the fire and prevented it from spreading through the building.

Recommended Preventive Action

For welding, cutting, burning or soldering operations, or any other allied processes using heat application, the WHSCC considers **readily available** and **located and accessible** to mean **within reach**. In this case, the fire extinguisher should have been near the welder on the work platform.

It's the law!

General Regulation 91-191 requires that suitable fire extinguishing equipment be **readily available** where any welding is performed. *Regulation 91-191* further requires employers and employees to comply with CSA standard CAN/CSA-W117-W117.2-M87, "Safety in Welding, Cutting and Allied Processes", which requires a fire extinguisher to be **located and accessible** at the welding site.

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WHSCC
All Accidents are Preventable

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Check out the CCOHS website, www.ccohs.ca, or call 1 800 263-8466 for health and safety information.