

SAFETY ALERT

November 15, 2022

Use of Propane Torches in Lab Areas

Hazards: Fire

Hand-held propane torches are occasionally required for various lab area activities. Since these involve an open flame, a potential fire hazard exists and proper controls must be followed. Use of propane torches requires a Hot Work Permit issued by the LBNL Fire Marshal's Office within Protective Services. The requirements for hot work permits can be found in: [PUB-3000 Chapter 12 Work Process F](#)

In summary, use and storage of hand-held propane torches must meet the following requirements:

1. Ensure that there is a Work Activity associated with the work area that includes the use of hand-held propane torches. The hazard selected should be "hot work in laboratories and research areas" (Level 2 hazard).
2. Complete the required EHS0535 "Hot Work" training class. In addition, EHS0520/EHS0522 "Fire Extinguisher" training is required.
3. Contact the LBNL Hot Work Coordinator at Hotwork@lbl.gov to arrange for a hot work permit. They will inspect the work area and equipment prior to issuing a permit.
4. DO NOT use the propane torch near combustible or flammable materials. Designate a safe area in the lab area where hot work can be performed that is away from other hazards.
5. An ABC-type fire extinguisher must be available within 30 feet of the hot work.
6. Properly store the propane cylinders when not in use. LBNL policy does not allow storage of propane or other flammable gases in flammable storage cabinets containing flammable liquids.
7. Store securely in a segregated and approved area i.e cabinet or shelf. Store away from direct sunlight in a dry, cool and well-ventilated area, away from incompatible materials.
8. Always disconnect the turbo torch head "pressure regulator head" when not in use. This is the rigid fitting on the top of the cylinder, used to start and control the flame. See picture below.

9. Propane cylinders that are empty are not returnable and must be properly disposed through the Waste Management Group. Do not dispose of used propane cylinders in the regular trash.

If you have questions regarding use of open flame equipment in your lab area, contact your supervisor or the ETA Safety Manager, Ron Scholtz, at X8137.

