



FACILITIES UNDERTAKING HOT WORK

Hot Work: A real fire risk.

Any undertaking or process which introduces a source of ignition is considered Hot Work*.

Hot Work in occupied buildings is an activity that is not normally directly related to the primary business purpose of the facility. Instead it is more often associated with renovations or maintenance activities and often takes place in different locations and surroundings. It is this non-routine aspect of Hot Work that increases risk and mandates the need for enforced risk prevention procedures. A Hot Work permit is a system designed to eliminate or mitigate risks from these activities by controlling how and when Hot Work is conducted.

If possible, please avoid hot work in Church-owned facilities and pursue all possible less hazardous alternatives. However, to help the Church reduce the risk of fire loss following Hot Works, RMS strongly recommends that every entity adopt Hot Work procedures to mitigate serious risks to the facility and its occupants.

*Hot Work Includes but is not limited to: welding, thermal or oxygen cutting or heating, grinding, any other heat or spark producing operation.

Conduct a Risk Assessment

Before any Hot Work is planned in an area not normally intended for Hot Work, a thorough process of hazard identification followed by an assessment of the risks should be completed. This is to check that any hazardous areas impacted by the Hot Works are isolated or controlled to prevent the ignition of any materials from the Hot Work process.

After the controls have been implemented, a review of the risk assessment should be done to verify that the residual risks are acceptable or to highlight that further controls are required. If the final risk assessment is acceptable and no alternate method is viable then the facility manager could issue a Hot Work permit to the person(s) doing the work ensuring that they are competent and **trained for the task**.

The person responsible for the work (the recipient of the Hot Works permit) needs to make sure that there is at least one other competent person on the job acting as a continuous fire watch with appropriate firefighting equipment readily at hand. The person delegated as the fire-watch **must be trained** in operating fire and emergency equipment and capable of initiating emergency procedures as required.

Following the completion of the work and after a minimum period of at least 60 minutes, a final post Hot Work check should be conducted to ensure that the area is safe from any potentially unseen smouldering embers from the work. However, this post hot work check should be extended to beyond 60 minutes having regard to the building elements combustibility and location of the site as part of the risk assessment process. The Hot Work permit can now be signed off subject to the reinstatement of any isolations or controls put in place for the duration of the work and all persons involved have left the site safely.

Mandating procedures like this and understanding the serious risks that are posed by uncontrolled Hot Work is a positive step toward effectively managing a facility. Hot Work permits and procedures are available from RMS or possibly your Union or Local Conference.

READY TO HELP

Risk Management Service is a dedicated service department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific.

rms.org.au

