



SHARP START



April 29 — Not There When You Need It

No fire extinguisher present	Stopped, the employee informed them their fire extinguisher was not on their wall. Employee thanked me and stopped work until they got one.
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Hot work was underway.

Sparks were flying. Heat was being generated. But there was no fire extinguisher nearby.

Everything looked normal. The work was moving forward. Until you stop and ask one question: *What happens if something catches?*

Because with hot work, the risk isn't just the task it's what the task can start.

A spark lands in the wrong place. Material begins to smolder. Something ignites. And in that moment, response time is everything.

Without an extinguisher in reach, the situation changes fast from something small and controllable... to something that spreads.

Nothing had happened. But if it did, there would have been nothing ready to stop it.

The work was stopped. The extinguisher was brought in. Then the job continued.

This wasn't about doing the work wrong. It was about not being ready for what could go wrong.

Hazards

- Fire from sparks or slag
- Ignition of nearby combustible materials
- Delayed response to fire
- Rapid fire spread
- Burns and smoke exposure
- Line of fire exposure to thermal energy

Stats

- Hot work is a leading cause of industrial fires
- Many fires start during welding, cutting, or grinding
- Immediate access to fire extinguishers reduces damage and injury
- Fires can escalate in seconds without immediate response

Words of Wisdom

- If you can't put it out, don't start it
- Be ready before the spark
- Preparation is protection

Pause and Think

It's easy to focus on getting the job started tools ready, setup complete, task clear. But sometimes what's missing isn't part of the job... it's part of the response. We don't expect something to go wrong.

That's exactly why we have to be ready when they do. Because when something ignites, there's no pause.

And if the response isn't already there, it's already too late.

- Do I have a fire extinguisher present before starting hot work?
- Is it within reach not across the area?
- Am I prepared for something going wrong, or just focused on it going right?
- Would I stop work if this wasn't in place?