



## March 9 — Short Sleeves, Hot Sparks

Noticed employee was about to start welding in short sleeves.

Stopped them and reminded them to check all PPE.

An employee was preparing to weld while wearing short sleeves. The task hadn't started yet. The arc wasn't struck. But the exposure was already there.

Welding produces ultraviolet radiation, sparks, and molten slag. That exposure doesn't require a long duration to cause injury. Burns can happen instantly. UV radiation can cause arc flash to unprotected skin and eyes. Even small sparks can ignite clothing or embed into exposed skin.

If you're welding, cover your skin.

Comfort does not override exposure.

PPE is part of the process, not optional.

This wasn't about not knowing welding is hot. Everyone who welds understands sparks fly.

It was about normalization getting comfortable enough with the task that protective layers start to feel optional.

But molten metal doesn't adjust for comfort.

### Hazards

- Skin burns from sparks or slag
- UV radiation burns
- Clothing ignition
- Embedded metal fragments
- Eye injury if additional PPE is compromised

### Stats

- Welding-related burns are among the most common hot work injuries.
- UV radiation from welding arcs can cause skin and eye injury within minutes.
- PPE deficiencies are a frequent contributing factor in welding injuries.
- Many hot work injuries occur during routine, familiar tasks.

### Humans at Work

When you weld every day, getting burned starts to feel normal. A spark down the sleeve. A little slag on the forearm. You shake it off and keep going. That's how it creeps in. The more it happens, the less serious it feels. And when you've been welding a long time, you trust your control. You know where the arc is. You know how it moves.

But that arc doesn't care how experienced you are. Molten metal doesn't respect toughness. There's a difference between being a welder and proving you're a welder. We can lay down clean beads without laying them into our skin. Pride should come from the weld, and not from the burn mark.

### Pause and Think

- Are your sleeves long and fire-resistant?
- Is your skin fully covered?
- Are you dressed for the task not the temperature?