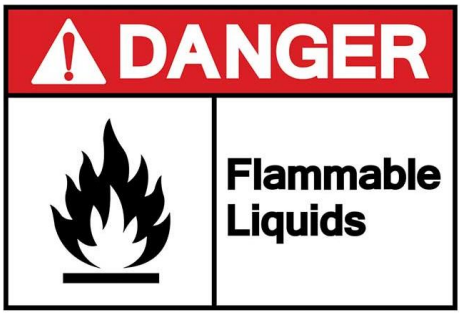
FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS

- Eliminate ignition sources (sparks, smoking, flames, hot surfaces) when working with flammable and combustible liquids.
- Use the smallest amount of flammable liquid necessary in the work area.
- Keep storage areas cool and dry.
- Store flammable and combustible liquids away from incompatible materials (e.g., oxidizers).



A combustible substance is one that catches fire and burns easily; a flammable substance is one that continues to burn even after the ignition source is removed. Determine the flammability of a combustible liquid by:

- Looking up the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) at www.iws.support
- Find it's flash point- the lowest temperature at which it's vapors will ignite. The flash point can be found on the Safety Data Sheet for the specific material. SDS sheets are stored at the Right to Know Center located at the online support center.
- Fire point- the temperature at which a combustible liquid gives off vapors.
- Type and minimum concentration of extinguishing agents needed to extinguish the fire.
- Combustion rate. Note that the temperature of the liquid will increase during combustion.

Flammable liquids burn with intensity. Few materials can generate as many British thermal units (BTUs) per pound as flammable liquids. This accounts for the rapid heat buildup and how fast the fire spreads.

It is extremely important for employees to realize that the liquid itself does not burn- it's the vapors which are invisible and generally heavier than air that burn. The vapors settle to the floor and are moved by air flow. Always consult the safety data sheet (SDS) provided by the manufacturer to determine the flammability of a particular liquid. If you find a product on your worksite that does not accompany an SDS in the support then you must fill out a "Chemical Notification Form" in the Forms tab of the support center.

It is important when storing or working with flammable liquids that the liquid and its vapors are not exposed to ignition sources such as:

- Open flames
- Electrical switches
- Open motors
- Static electricity
- Friction and mechanical sparks
- Smoking
- Heat guns
- Cutting and welding
- Radiant heat

Each day as you go out to your work area take a moment and look around- what flammable liquids are you using or storing? Are there any ignition sources around? Are they stored properly? Is there an SDS for that product? Take the time necessary to properly prepare your work area and you will prevent a fire from occurring.

PREPARE AND PREVENT NOT REPAIR AND REPENT