

## Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

## Smash repair industry (including spray painters) – Flammable liquids

Solvents and many paints used in the smash repair industry are flammable and can cause fire or explosion if they come into contact with ignition sources such as:

- open flames from welding
- sparks from welding or grinding
- static electricity and electrical sparks (including electrical switches, lighting and non flame proof electrical equipment)
- cigarettes.

### Flammable liquids at your workplace

Fire and explosion protection:

- have fire extinguishers (CO<sub>2</sub> or dry chemical are most suitable for small quantities) handy and train workers on how to use them
- keep the smallest, practical amount of paints and solvents at the workplace
- keep your flammable storage area separate to other storage areas and keep it locked when not in use
- keep flammable liquids together but separated from incompatible materials, such as gas cylinders, oxidizing agents (class 5.1 or 5.2 dangerous goods) and toxic materials
- keep flammable liquids in an area with a spill containment area (steel drip tray or concrete bund) to prevent spread of spills
- ensure storage areas and paint mixing rooms are well-ventilated to stop the build-up of vapours
- when pouring paints and solvents, earth the containers to stop the build-up of static electricity
- decant away from the storage area to avoid a fire spreading to the storage area
- clean up spills of flammable liquids immediately using non combustible absorbent materials (sand or vermiculite)
- fit a pump or a tap to solvent drums to prevent the need for pouring
- keep the lid on full or partially full containers (or seal them in another way)
- clean out empty containers or leave them open until they have dried out before stacking them up for disposal
- store solvent soaked rags under water
- keep ignition sources (welding, grinding etc) and combustible materials such as timber and fabrics away from flammable liquids
- have an emergency plan and train your workers – everyone at the workplace should know what to do in an emergency such as fire or explosion
- flammable liquid storage areas and paint mixing areas can have enough solvent in the air to make it a flammable atmosphere. If this is the case, only use suitably designed explosion protected electrical equipment in these areas (contact the Electrical Safety Office for more information).

Licensing and signage:

- check with the council to see if you may need a Flammable and Combustible Liquids licence.
- if you have over 250L of flammable liquids, you may also need to place a HAZCHEM sign at the entrance to the site and the entrance to the building or storage area with a class 3 dangerous goods label.

Disposal of waste / flammable liquids:

- check with your local council and the Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information on general obligations and workplace health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit [www.deir.qld.gov.au](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au)

For more information on Dangerous Goods visit the Emergency Services website at [www.emergency.qld.gov.au/chem](http://www.emergency.qld.gov.au/chem).

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