



RISK MANAGEMENT CORNER

What's Hot in Fire Prevention? Equipment Maintenance!

Fires continue to ravage businesses across the country. Spontaneous combustion, heating and electrical systems, smoking, poor housekeeping, storing flammables—all common causes of industrial fires. But, they are certainly not the only risks needing attention.

Fires Don't Discriminate

A number of fires related to mechanical equipment can be blamed on poor maintenance or improper use, and many could have been prevented with regular upkeep and appropriate employee training.

To help prevent fires, all machines, from hand-held power tools to complicated equipment, require closely monitored maintenance, and operating procedures that don't deviate from the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations.

Fires from mechanical failure can sometimes be predictable. Other fires may be harder to anticipate. Some commonplace situations can become surprising sources of fire, such as:

- Production machines—attended and unattended
- Overheated light fixtures
- Pinched wiring exposed to flammables, which heat up and ignite
- Exhaust systems and fans
- Forklifts catching fire hours after being shut off
- Overloaded electrical panels

It is important to understand the fire potential that may be present from the equipment your business uses. You can help identify many fire hazards, both in and outside of your premises, through regularly completing fire prevention checklists. When hazards are discovered, you can monitor and help control them with a preventive maintenance plan. Proper setup, scheduled maintenance, and following the manufacturer's use specifications are vital to keeping equipment in safe working condition and preventing mechanical fires.

The second week of October is National Fire Prevention Week. It's an excellent opportunity to reinforce fire prevention at your business as part of a solid risk management program. For more resources on fire prevention, contact your local Federated marketing representative. Federated clients can also contact our Risk Management Resource Center at 1.800.838.1760.

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