



PHYSICAL PLANT POLICY MANUAL – HOT WORK PROGRAM

It is SUNY Potsdam policy to provide a safe workplace for its employees in accordance with all federal, state and local regulations. The Physical Plant has implemented a department safety program to help identify workplace hazards, promote safe work practices and provide safety information to all department employees.

PURPOSE

Hot Work is defined as welding, thermite welding, thermal spraying, installation of torch applied roof systems, cutting, soldering, brazing, grinding, thawing pipe and other similar operations which produce sparks, hot slag, radiant heat, or convective heat. Potential health safety and property hazards may result from the hot work process.

The Hot Work program is intended to:

- Preserve the safety of the worker performing the hot work
- Ensure safety to all building occupants during hot work operations
- Prevent accidental activation of the building fire detection system
- Limit losses from accidental ignition of property

All hot work activity requires a Hot Work Permit be completed and issued by SUNY Potsdam Physical Plant, Facilities Planning or Environmental Health and Safety departments.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to any SUNY Potsdam employee or outside contractor/consultant who will be performing hot work operations in any campus owned building. This includes but is not limited to campus maintenance and operations, departmental construction or outside contractor personnel.

Employees and contractors, when performing hot work in SUNY Potsdam College buildings, must follow applicable standards:

OSHA Subpart J, Welding and Cutting
OSHA 1926.350 "Gas Welding and Cutting"
OSHA 1926.351 "Arc Welding and Cutting"
OSHA 1926.352 "Fire Prevention"
OSHA 1926.353 "Ventilation and Protection in Welding, Cutting and Heating"
NYS Fire Code Chapter 35 "Welding and Other Hot Work"
NFPA 51B "Fire Prevention in Use of Cutting and Welding Processes
SUNY Potsdam
Hot Work Permit Program procedures.

RESPONSIBILITY

Environmental Health and Safety

- Assure an adequate Hot Work Program is established and implemented for SUNY

Potsdam Physical Plant and services employees and contracted vendors.

- Provide Hot Work training to employees to include portable extinguisher training.
- Inform Facilities Management who may hire outside contractors that these contractors are required to abide by the requirements of this program.

Campus Code Officials

- Provide hot work permits only to workers who have been properly trained as to the requirements of this program.
- Assure that the hot work area is properly protected. Assess the area for possible fire hazards. Ensure a fire watch is assigned.
- Authorize permits only when fire protection systems are not disabled.
- Schedule hot work activities at times when it is less likely to impact campus programming and building occupancy if possible.
- Ensure that only approved equipment is designated for hot work activities.
- Stop hot work activities that do not have a proper permit on display and/or have not complied with all requirements of this program.

Project Managers

- When coordinating construction work, inform all contractors of this program and ensure all contractors and subcontractors comply with this program. Hot work policy should be presented at project kick off meetings.
- Work with contractor's supervisors in enforcing this program.
- Stop hot work activities that do not have a proper permit on display and/or have not complied with all requirements of this program.

Employees Responsible for Hot Work Operations

- Attend training on Hot Work program
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of the provisions of NYS Fire Code Chapter 35.
- Obtain Hot Work permit before performing hot work.
- Understand all fire prevention precautions and how to safely use fire extinguishers.
- Properly prepare area before performing hot work.
- Ensure Impairment Coordinator is notified if work will create an impairment to any life safety system or effect any egress paths.
- Ensure supervisor and electrical staff are notified if any smoke detector will need to be disabled for hot work and fire watch duration only.
- Use only approved equipment for hot work activities and report any equipment problems to your supervisor.
- Immediately inform supervisor of any hot work activities with no permit posted.

DESIGNATED HOT WORK AREAS

Whenever possible, hot work activities should be limited to controlled environments, such as a designated hot work area like a welding shop where the likelihood of fire is minimized. Designated

hot work areas will not require a hot work permit, but all personnel performing hot work are to be trained and are expected to follow all applicable procedures.

SUNY Potsdam Designated Hot Work Areas are:

B170 Instrument Repair Room Crane
Welding Shop at the Service Center
Auto Shop at the Service Center
Heating Plant Mechanical areas

If possible, hot work should be performed outside at least 10 feet or greater away from the building. SUNY Potsdam requires hot work permits for exterior work.

PROCEDURE FOR PERMITTED TEMPORARY HOT WORK

Prohibited Areas

Hot Work shall only be conducted in areas designed or authorized for that purpose by the personnel responsible for the Hot Work Program. Hot Work shall not be conducted in the following areas:

- In areas not authorized.
- In sprinklered buildings while such protection is impaired.
- In the presence of an explosive atmosphere (mixtures of flammable gases, vapors, liquid, or dusts in the air) or explosive atmospheres that may develop inside unclean or improperly prepared tanks or equipment which have previously contained such materials or that may develop in areas with an accumulation of combustible dusts.
- In areas near the storage of large quantities of exposed, readily ignitable materials such as bulk paper, cotton or loose combustible materials.

In the event that hot work must occur in one of the above areas, Campus Code Officials, EH&S and where required Campus Project Managers must meet to discuss further safety precautions.

Hot Work Permit

No hot work activity outside of specifically designated hot work areas is allowed without first obtaining a hot work permit. All persons engaged in hot work operations outside the designated hot work areas must fill out a permit. This includes, but is not limited to SUNY Potsdam employees and outside contractors.

Note: Applications can be found at: <http://www.potsdam.edu/about/safety/ehs/permits>

Permits may be granted for extended times based on the project. However, worksite checks, fire watches, and all other applicable requirements must be completed **daily**. Permits are limited to one job site.

Authorization

Employees of the Physical Plant and outside contractors may obtain Hot Work permits from the campus Code Officials. These officials will review the hot work application, perform a jobsite inspection and issue the permit if the personnel, intended work and area comply with all of the requirements of the Hot Work Program. **University Police shall be notified of any Hot Work permit issuance via email.**

Campus Fire Alarm Systems

In some instances, fire-monitoring devices such as smoke detectors must be protected/ covered or deactivated in the immediate vicinity to prevent general alarms from sounding throughout the building. Any planned system or device deactivation or the covering of smoke detectors must be noted on the hot work permit application. SUNY Potsdam Physical Plant Electrical dept. and the campus Impairment Coordinator must also be notified. At the end of hot work activities each day, including required fire watches the alarm system/device shall be re-activated and any protective covers removed.

Monitoring

SUNY Potsdam's fire alarm systems are monitored by University Police. When a device is activated and a general alarm sounds the building will be evacuated, University Police will notify, Potsdam Fire Department and both will respond.

In some instances, a building or a portion of a building's fire alarm system will need to be taken "off line" to accommodate hot work activities. This activity is intended to reduce or eliminate any unwanted alarms and subsequent evacuation of the building. Devices in the general area of the hot work may be protected/covered to prevent an unwanted alarm. If a device is activated while the system is "off line" the system will sound a general alarm in the building which will in turn cause the building to be evacuated and University Police to respond.

The scenario above requires that a fire watch be performed for the duration of the event as this is considered an impairment to the fire alarm system. The Impairment Coordinator shall be notified prior to this to ensure that University Police and Potsdam Fire Department are notified of the impairment.

For some construction projects in which hot work activities will be continuously taking place the building's fire alarm system may be scheduled with the Physical Plant Electrical dept. to be taken off line each day for a specific time frame for the duration of the work. The general contractor is required to perform all fire watches and comply with all the requirements of the Hot Work Program for the project duration.

Fire Extinguishers

Suitable fire extinguishing equipment shall be maintained in a state of readiness for instant use. SUNY Potsdam EH&S dept. may provide approved extinguishers for employee and contractor hot work use.

Fire Watch

A fire watch shall be required whenever hot work activities take place inside campus buildings. A mandatory 30-minute fire watch shall be conducted for all hot work activities. The campus code enforcement officers may mandate a longer time period based on the hazards or work being performed.

Fire Watch Requirements

- Fire Watch personnel shall be trained on the Potsdam Hot Work Program.
- They shall be trained on the use of fire extinguishers and have fire extinguishers readily

available during the entire fire watch period.

- They shall be familiar with the building layout, responsible for extinguishing spot fires and communicating an alarm in the event of a fire and subsequent evacuation.
- The fire watch shall include the entire hot work area. Hot work conducted in areas with vertical or horizontal fire exposures that are not observable by a single individual shall have additional personnel assigned to the fire watch.

Note: Upon completion of Hot Work activities the Hot Work Permit and required fire safety checklists shall be returned to the Project Manager or a Campus Code Enforcement Officer within twenty-four hours.

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The Hot Work Program can be accessed on the Environmental Health and Safety website at:

<http://www.potsdam.edu/about/safety/ehs/policies>