

# Don't Let the Pressure of Compressed Gas Get to You



## What's at Stake?

The hazards associated with compressed gas include oxygen displacement, fires, explosions, toxic effects from certain gases, reactivity and projectile concerns.

## What's the Danger?

An employee was killed when a compressed gas cylinder turned into a projectile because its valve was knocked off. Another worker suffocated after entering a space filled with nitrogen from a leaking cylinder. A massive explosion and fire at an industrial plant sent huge fireballs and gas cylinders flying hundreds of feet into the sky. These are all real-life examples of what can happen when compressed gas is not used, handled or stored correctly.

## How to Protect Yourself

### Read and Follow Labels and Safety Data Sheets

- Compressed gas cylinders must be properly labeled. Empty cylinders must also be marked as such. If you see a cylinder improperly marked, fix it or report it.
- Read the safety data sheet carefully for information about handling, storage and use and emergency procedures.

### Know and Use Safe Work Practices for Handling and Use

- Wear required PPE.
- Use regulators that are compatible with the gas and regulators and gauges rated for the pressure in the system.
- Replace cap when not in use. This protects the valve to prevent leaks and other hazards.
- Never roll a cylinder to move it. Instead, use the appropriate cart, cradle or platform.
- Never attempt to refill a cylinder and never mix gases in a cylinder.
- Tag defective cylinders. Notify your supervisor of any problems, including difficult-to-open valves, so they can be addressed by the supplier. Do not try to fix it yourself.
- If a gas cylinder begins to leak, evacuate the area and call for emergency assistance.

### Follow Safe Storage Procedures

- Select a dry, secure location well vented to the outdoors.
- Keep cylinders away from heat and any source of ignition.
- Keep cylinders upright and secured so they cannot fall or be knocked over.
- Store fuel gases and other flammable or combustible gases away from oxygen cylinders.

## **Final Word**

Remain calm when working with gases under pressure. Follow safe use, handling and storage procedures.