TOOLBOX TALK BRIEFKIT

Hot Works & Hot Work Permits

A ready-to-deliver toolbox talk for foremen and supervisors. 8-10 minute spoken script plus briefing register for operative sign-in.

REFERENCE	TBT-HOT-WORKS-001	**DURATION**	8-10 minutes
DATE		**SITE**	
TRAINER (PRINT)		**SIGNATURE**	

1 Why it matters

Hot works starts more serious site fires than almost anything else, and a lot of the bad ones kick off long after everyone's gone home, from a spark that smouldered unnoticed in a void or a pile of rubbish. A few minutes of cutting can burn down a building if the area wasn't cleared and watched. That's why hot works is controlled by a permit and a fire watch, it's not red tape, it's because this is genuinely how fires start.

2 PPE required for this task

- Eye and face protection (welding or cutting shield, or goggles)
- Heat and flame-resistant gloves
- Flame-retardant overalls, nothing synthetic or oil-soaked
- RPE or local extraction for welding and cutting fume

3 What to say

Spoken script for the supervisor. Read or paraphrase, in order.

1 What counts as hot works

Welding and brazing obviously, but also disc cutting and grinding, blow torches, soldering, hot air guns and bitumen boilers, anything throwing sparks or making a flame or serious heat. If you're about to make sparks or fire, it's hot works and these rules apply. People forget that grinding and disc cutting count, but they throw out a shower of hot sparks, so they're firmly in.

2 Get the permit before you start

Most sites run a hot work permit, a permit to work, and it's not a box-ticking exercise. It forces you and the supervisor to check the area, set the controls, agree a fire watch and put a time limit on the job. No permit, no hot works. If there isn't a system in place, come and see me before you strike an arc or pull a trigger, we sort it first.

3 Clear and protect the area

Get combustibles well away before you start, rubbish, timber, fuel, gas bottles, packaging, anything that'll catch, and keep a good clear zone around and below the work. Whatever you can't move, cover it with fire blankets or screens. And remember sparks fall and roll, so think hard about what's underneath you and behind the wall, not just what's in front of you.

4 Mind the hidden side and what's behind

Heat travels through metal and through walls, and sparks find gaps. Check the far side of any partition or wall you're cutting or welding on, and watch for voids, ducts and cavities where a spark can drop in and smoulder out of sight. A lot of the serious fires start in a void or a roof space that nobody thought to check, hours after the work was done.

5 Have the right extinguisher to hand

Get the correct fire extinguisher, or more than one, within arm's reach before you start, not sat in the van. Know which type for what, same as we covered in the extinguisher talk. If a small fire starts, you want to kill it in the first few seconds, and that only works if the means to put it out is right there beside you, not a walk away.

6 The fire watch carries on after you stop

Someone watches during the work, and this is the bit people get wrong, the watch carries on for at least an hour after you finish, because smouldering material can take that long to flare up into a fire. On higher-risk jobs the permit may want longer or repeat checks. Don't sign the permit off and walk away the second the grinder goes quiet, that's when half these fires take hold.

7 **Gas cylinders and fume**

Secure cylinders upright, check the hoses and that flashback arrestors are fitted, and turn the gas off at the cylinder when you're done, not just at the torch. Store and move them properly, they're a serious hazard on their own. And welding and cutting fume is harmful, some of it causes cancer, so ventilate, use extraction and wear the right mask, hot works isn't only about the fire risk.

4 Common mistakes to call out

Starting hot works with no permit where one is required

Not clearing combustibles, leaving rubbish or fuel near the work

Forgetting sparks fall and roll, ignoring what's below the work

Not checking the far side of a wall or partition being cut or welded

No fire extinguisher to hand, or the wrong type for the risk

Stopping the fire watch the moment the work finishes (smouldering flares later)

Leaving the gas on at the torch instead of shutting off at the cylinder

Cylinders not secured upright, or hoses and flashback arrestors not checked

Welding or cutting in poor ventilation with no fume extraction or RPE

Doing hot works near fuels, solvents or a flammable atmosphere

5 Watch on site this week

What the supervisor should be actively spotting on walk-arounds.

Hot works happening with no permit on a permit site

Combustible materials, rubbish or fuel left close to the work

No clear zone below or around cutting, grinding or welding

Walls and partitions being cut without the other side checked

No extinguisher to hand, or the wrong type for the risk

Operatives downing tools and leaving with no fire watch period

Gas cylinders lying down, unsecured, or left live at the torch

Missing or damaged flashback arrestors on gas hoses

Welding fume with no extraction or RPE in an enclosed space

Hot works near stored fuel, solvents or LPG

6 Confirm the team understood

Ask one or two of these at the end of the talk.

1. Name three jobs that count as hot works. (Any of: welding, disc cutting or grinding, brazing, soldering, blow torch work, bitumen boilers.)
2. How long should the fire watch continue after the work stops? (At least one hour, because smouldering material can flare up well after you finish.)
3. Before cutting or welding on a wall, what must you check? (The far side and any voids or cavities, because heat and sparks travel through and can ignite out of sight.)
4. When you finish with a gas torch, where do you turn the gas off? (At the cylinder, not just the torch.)

Briefing register: Hot Works & Hot Work Permits

All operatives who attend this toolbox talk must sign below. Their signature confirms they have heard and understood the briefing.

Briefing delivered by:

Name (print):		**Date:**	
Signature:		**Time:**	
Site:			

Attendees. I confirm I have heard and understood the briefing detailed above:

#	Name (print)	Company / Role	Signature	Date	CSCS / Ticket No.
1					
2					
3					
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12					

Keep this register in the site Safety File. Additional sheets may be appended if more than 12 operatives are briefed.