

**Builders Risk Loss Control & Prevention Series**

# Property Protection Recommendations for Subcontractors

A Publication of ACE USA Risk Control Services

## **Using these Recommendations**

To minimize costly interruptions and damage to the project as a result of property hazards, we recommend the property protection measures stated below be included in subsequent contracts with subcontractors. Federal, OSHA, State and Municipal laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations already mandate many of these controls. For appropriate contract language, legal counsel should be consulted.

Only measures applicable to the operations of the subcontractor(s) should be included in the contract. For example, a roofing contractor may not conduct operations which would require temporary heating controls. However, measures involving water/rain controls would be directly related to the scope of roofwork.

In addition to those listed below, subcontractors will need to understand that additional protection requirements may need to be developed and communicated during the course of the project.

## **Flammable & Combustible Liquids**

- Part of the inspection and inventory process provide that only a day's supply of flammable and hazardous materials, and only ignition sources in use be present inside the structure.
- Approved or U.L. Listed dispensing containers are to be used for handling of flammable liquids of more than 1 gallon. All flammable liquid fuel containers must be U.L. listed and be provided with spring loaded caps and flash arresters if stored inside a structure.
- Dispensing of flammable liquids is to be done with approved bonding and grounding methods.
- Diesel fuel tanks must be at least 50 feet from the structure under construction. Diking must be in place to prevent spillage and spread of fire.

## **Cutting & Welding**

- A written permit with the date and time for which the operation is approved, signed by the jobsite superintendent or designee is to be posted in the area of the operation.
- All combustible materials are to be removed from the hot work area and floors swept clean. Wood floors must be covered by metal or wet down.
- A fire extinguisher having a minimum rating of 2A, 10 BC must be maintained nearby.
- A fire watch is to be maintained for at least 30 minutes after hot work is complete.
- The area of operation is to be inspected by a representative of the jobsite superintendent to ensure the above is completed prior to permit issuance.

## **Electrical**

- The power supplied to temporary wiring must be: 1. Properly installed GFI breakers to prevent overloading of circuits, and 2. Disconnected at the end of each workday.
- All temporary electrical wiring must be installed by a licensed electrician.

## **Temporary Heating**

- Only propane tanks connected to an appliance may be located inside the structure.
- Maintain the area in the immediately proximity of heating devices free of debris.
- Locate portable units on a clear, level, unobstructed, surface. Under no circumstances are heating units to be perched upon skids, stacks of building materials, waste, or debris. They can be installed in elevated positions above the floor by appropriate support methods. The base of heaters must be insulated from combustible floors by a non-combustible material.
- An 18" minimum clearance from combustible materials must be maintained. Where

visqueen is used to contain the heat or keep out rain from an area, clearances must account for movement of sheeting by wind.

- Maintenance is to be performed only by designated and experienced staff. Units are to be fueled only after cooled down, and hoses & fittings checked to verify integrity.
- Portable heaters must be equipped with an approved automatic device to shut off the flow of gas to the main burner and pilot light in the event of flame failure.

### **Housekeeping**

- Responsibility is to be assigned to prevent accumulations of packing material and other combustible debris.
- Points of debris accumulation (including dumpsters) must be placed away from the structure, from storage, and from other areas where there are values of building materials at risk as a result of a dumpster fire.
- Open or uncontrolled fires of any size are prohibited, be it for burning of debris or for other purposes.

### **Fire Extinguishers**

- OSHA specifies maintaining a minimum of one 2A fire extinguisher for every 3,000 square feet on construction sites. Since small extinguishers are the frequent target of theft, larger multi-use extinguishers can be substituted to meet this requirement. Fire extinguishers are required to be readily accessible, meaning a travel distance of no more than 75 feet between extinguishers.
- Extinguishers must be inspected and maintained, and deployed to provide reasonably prompt access by all areas. They must be UL listed and protected from freezing.
- Employees must be trained in the general principles of fire extinguisher use and the hazards involved with incipient stage fire fighting.
- A fire extinguisher of at least a 10B rating, must be provided within 50 feet where more than 5 gallons of flammable or combustible liquids are in use, or where 5 pounds or more of flammable gas are in use.

### **Drains & Piping**

- A means to ensure the integrity of piping and closure of valves on piping must be in effect. This includes assuring that caps are in place and water valves are kept closed.
- Basement and roof drains are not to be covered or obstructed by accumulated materials. All drains must be maintained, operational and free flowing.
- Permanent fixed fire hose stations, where provided, are not to be used as a source of construction water. If inactive, shut down procedures at the end of the day must include ensuring that valves are closed.

### **Rain**

- Roofing contractors must adequately secure their work at the end of each shift, and prior to severe weather, including sealing the leading edges of the roof.
- Parapet walls must be temporarily protected until the cap and flashing has been installed.
- Shutdown procedures must be sufficient to ensure that windows opened during the day are closed at the end of each day.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY This material contains general information only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from a safety expert or legal counsel.