



FREE EMPLOYER HOT WORK SAFETY TOOLKIT | SOUTH AFRICA

HOT WORK PERMIT & FIRE WATCH READINESS PACK

**FREE
DOWNLOAD**

HOT WORK + FIRE WATCH PACK

WELDING + CUTTING + GRINDING + SPARK-PRODUCING WORK

A practical employer pack to assess hot work, control combustibles, verify firefighting equipment, appoint a fire watch where required, authorise the job, monitor the work and document final close-out.

ASSESS THE JOB

Ignition sources, combustibles, adjacent areas and changing conditions.

AUTHORISE SAFELY

Responsibilities, permit validity, firefighting equipment and stop-work triggers.

VERIFY CLOSE-OUT

Fire watch, post-work checks, residual heat, corrective actions and final release.

1

ASSESS

2

ISOLATE

3

CLEAR

4

EQUIP

5

AUTHORISE

6

WATCH

7

RECHECK

8

CLOSE



Use the Permit as a Control System

A signed form does not make unsafe work safe.

IMPORTANT SCOPE NOTE

This pack is a practical employer starting point. It does not prove legal compliance, engineering adequacy, employee competence, building compliance or suitability for hazardous atmospheres. Specialist controls may be required for tanks, vessels, pipelines, confined spaces, flammable atmospheres, combustible dust, gas systems and complex industrial processes.

RECOMMENDED WORKFLOW

1

1. ASSESS

Define the exact hot work, location, people and surrounding hazards.

2

2. ISOLATE

Control hazardous energy, processes, flammable substances and affected equipment.

3

3. CLEAR

Remove combustibles and inspect above, below, behind and through openings.

4

4. EQUIP

Confirm suitable firefighting equipment, barriers, PPE and emergency arrangements.

5

5. AUTHORISE

Set permit limits, responsible persons, conditions and expiry time.

6

6. WATCH

Monitor the job and adjacent areas where a fire watch is required.

7

7. RECHECK

Inspect for hot surfaces, sparks, smoke, smouldering and hidden heat.

8

8. CLOSE

Record final clearance, corrective actions and release of the work area.

STOP WORK PRINCIPLE

A permit is conditional permission. If the scope, location, materials, ventilation, fire protection, personnel or surrounding conditions change, stop and reassess before continuing.



Hot Work Permit - Job Details

Use one permit for one defined task, location and validity period.

PERMIT IDENTIFICATION

PERMIT NUMBER

DATE

DEPARTMENT / CONTRACTOR

EXACT WORK LOCATION

AREA OWNER / RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF HOT WORK

TYPE OF HOT WORK

☐ Welding

☐ Grinding

☐ Flame cutting

☐ Brazing / soldering

☐ Torch-applied work

☐ Other

PEOPLE INVOLVED

PERSON PERFORMING HOT WORK

SUPERVISOR

PERMIT ISSUER / AUTHORISER

FIRE WATCH (IF REQUIRED)

PROPOSED START TIME

PERMIT EXPIRY TIME

EXPECTED COMPLETION



Pre-Work Fire Risk Checklist

Physically inspect the work area before completing this page.

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Can the work be avoided, delayed or moved to a safer designated hot-work area?	☐	☐	☐
Has the exact task and spark / heat path been identified?	☐	☐	☐
Has the area above the work been inspected?	☐	☐	☐
Has the area below the work been inspected?	☐	☐	☐
Have spaces behind walls, panels or cladding been considered?	☐	☐	☐
Have floor, wall, roof or service penetrations been checked?	☐	☐	☐
Are combustible materials removed where reasonably practicable?	☐	☐	☐
Are immovable combustibles adequately protected?	☐	☐	☐
Are flammable liquids, gases or vapours absent or specifically controlled?	☐	☐	☐
Are drains, pits, voids or low points free from flammable vapour risk?	☐	☐	☐
Are adjoining rooms / spaces checked where heat or sparks may travel?	☐	☐	☐
Are fire doors, escape routes and emergency exits clear?	☐	☐	☐
Could the work affect alarms, detection or suppression systems?	☐	☐	☐
Could the work affect other employees, contractors or processes?	☐	☐	☐
Are changing conditions likely during the permit period?	☐	☐	☐



Combustibles & Adjacent Area Inspection

Record what can burn - not just what is next to the tool.

COMBUSTIBLE MATERIAL REGISTER

MATERIAL / FUEL	LOCATION	REMOVED?	PROTECTED?	ACTION / OWNER

ADJACENT-AREA INSPECTION

ABOVE / ROOF / CEILING VOID

BELOW / LOWER LEVEL

BEHIND WORK SURFACE

OPPOSITE SIDE OF WALL / PARTITION

NEARBY STORAGE / RACKING

OPENINGS / PENETRATIONS / DUCTS



Flammable Atmosphere & Isolation Review

Escalate when hazardous atmospheres or process hazards may exist.

DO NOT RELY ON THIS TEMPLATE ALONE

Hot work involving tanks, vessels, pipelines, fuel systems, flammable vapours, explosive atmospheres, combustible dust or confined spaces may require isolation, cleaning, purging, ventilation, atmospheric testing and specialist approval.

HIGH-RISK SCREENING

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Any flammable liquid, fuel, solvent, gas or volatile chemical nearby?	☐	☐	☐
Any tank, drum, vessel, pipe or process equipment involved?	☐	☐	☐
Could equipment contain combustible residue even if empty?	☐	☐	☐
Could vapours migrate from drains, pits, ducts or adjoining areas?	☐	☐	☐
Could combustible dust be present or generated?	☐	☐	☐
Is process / energy isolation required?	☐	☐	☐
Is lockout / tagout required under the site procedure?	☐	☐	☐
Is gas testing / atmospheric monitoring required?	☐	☐	☐
Is mechanical ventilation required?	☐	☐	☐
Is specialist / competent-person approval required before hot work?	☐	☐	☐

ISOLATION / SPECIALIST CONTROLS REQUIRED

RECORD ISOLATIONS, CLEANING, PURGING, VENTILATION, GAS-TESTING OR OTHER SPECIALIST CONTROLS

COMPETENT PERSON / SPECIALIST NAME AND APPROVAL REFERENCE



Hot Work Equipment & Gas Cylinder Checks

Verify the equipment actually being used on this job.

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Welding / cutting / grinding equipment visually checked before use?	☐	☐	☐
Electrical leads, plugs, connectors and electrode holders in suitable condition?	☐	☐	☐
Guards and handles fitted where required on grinding equipment?	☐	☐	☐
Correct disc / wheel selected and within rated speed?	☐	☐	☐
Gas cylinders upright and secured against falling?	☐	☐	☐
Correct regulators fitted and apparently serviceable?	☐	☐	☐
Hoses routed to avoid damage, heat and trip hazards?	☐	☐	☐
Flashback / non-return protection fitted where required by the system?	☐	☐	☐
Cylinder valves and connections protected from damage?	☐	☐	☐
Gas cylinders positioned away from unnecessary heat and spark exposure?	☐	☐	☐
Damaged or suspect equipment removed from service?	☐	☐	☐
Housekeeping around the equipment satisfactory?	☐	☐	☐

EQUIPMENT DEFECTS

A permit must not be used to approve defective equipment. Remove unsafe equipment from service and follow the employer maintenance / inspection process.



Fire Watch Appointment & Readiness

Use where the risk assessment or site procedure requires dedicated fire-watch coverage.

APPOINTMENT

FIRE WATCH NAME

EMPLOYER / DEPARTMENT

COVERAGE AREA

START TIME

EXPECTED RELEASE TIME

FIRE WATCH READINESS

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Understands the exact hot-work activity and spark / heat path	☐	☐	☐
Knows how to raise the site alarm / emergency call	☐	☐	☐
Has access to suitable firefighting equipment	☐	☐	☐
Can stop work if conditions become unsafe	☐	☐	☐
Can observe adjoining areas where sparks / heat may travel	☐	☐	☐
Will remain focused on the fire-watch role where dedicated watch is required	☐	☐	☐
Understands required post-work monitoring / recheck arrangements	☐	☐	☐
Knows who authorises final release of the area	☐	☐	☐

FIRE WATCH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FIRE WATCH SIGNATURE / INITIALS

BRIEFED BY

TIME



Firefighting, Alarm, PPE & Egress

Equipment is one layer - prevention and safe escape remain primary.

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Suitable firefighting equipment positioned and accessible?	☐	☐	☐
Selected equipment appropriate to credible fire types present?	☐	☐	☐
Equipment appears in serviceable condition / within site inspection system?	☐	☐	☐
Hose reel or additional protection available where applicable?	☐	☐	☐
Alarm / emergency communication method understood?	☐	☐	☐
Emergency contact details available?	☐	☐	☐
Escape routes and fire exits clear?	☐	☐	☐
Work leads / hoses do not obstruct evacuation routes?	☐	☐	☐
Workers know assembly / evacuation requirements?	☐	☐	☐
Required PPE identified from the task risk assessment?	☐	☐	☐
Eye / face / hand / body protection appropriate to the process?	☐	☐	☐
Respiratory / ventilation controls addressed where fumes may be generated?	☐	☐	☐

EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

ALARM METHOD / EMERGENCY NUMBER / ASSEMBLY POINT / SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS



Authorisation & Permit Validity

Authorise only after required controls are physically verified.

PERMIT CONDITIONS

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ All required controls are in place | ☐ Area has been inspected |
| ☐ Firefighting equipment is available | ☐ Fire watch arranged if required |
| ☐ Affected persons / contractors briefed | ☐ Permit limitations understood |

PERMIT VALIDITY

AUTHORISED START DATE / TIME

EXPIRY DATE / TIME

PERMIT LOCATION

SPECIAL CONDITIONS / PROHIBITED ACTIONS / STOP-WORK TRIGGERS

AUTHORISATION

PERMIT ISSUER / AUTHORISER

SIGNATURE

TIME

PERSON PERFORMING WORK

SIGNATURE

TIME

CONDITIONAL PERMISSION

If the task scope, location, materials, ventilation, personnel, process conditions, fire protection or surrounding hazards change, STOP and reassess. Reissue or amend the permit in accordance with the workplace procedure.



Live Hot Work Observation Log

Use for extended or higher-risk work where periodic verification is appropriate.

OBSERVATION RECORD

TIME	OBSERVER	CONDITION / CHECK	ACTION TAKEN	INITIAL

OBSERVE FOR CHANGE

Typical triggers include new combustible materials, loss of ventilation, change of work location, fire-watch absence, impaired firefighting equipment, process changes, weather changes, leaks, vapours or work expanding beyond the original permit scope.



Post-Work Fire Watch & Recheck Log

Do not close the permit simply because the tool has been switched off.

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Hot work has stopped and equipment has been made safe	☐	☐	☐
Immediate work area inspected	☐	☐	☐
Area above / below / behind re-inspected where relevant	☐	☐	☐
Adjacent room / opposite side of barrier checked where relevant	☐	☐	☐
Combustible waste / dust / debris checked	☐	☐	☐
Hidden cavities / penetrations checked where relevant	☐	☐	☐
No visible smoke, flame or smouldering material	☐	☐	☐
No abnormal heat detected on vulnerable surfaces	☐	☐	☐
Fire protection / alarms restored if they were legitimately impaired	☐	☐	☐
Area remains under required observation until release conditions are met	☐	☐	☐

POST-WORK OBSERVATION RECORD

TIME	AREA CHECKED	CONDITION	INITIAL



Completion Inspection & Permit Closure

Final release must be a deliberate verification step.

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Specified hot work is complete	☐	☐	☐
Hot-work equipment removed or safely isolated	☐	☐	☐
Temporary screens / protection removed only when safe	☐	☐	☐
Combustible materials not reintroduced prematurely	☐	☐	☐
Work area inspected for residual heat	☐	☐	☐
Adjacent areas inspected	☐	☐	☐
Housekeeping restored	☐	☐	☐
No smoke, smouldering or evidence of ignition	☐	☐	☐
Outstanding defects / issues transferred to corrective action register	☐	☐	☐
Area released back to owner / operations	☐	☐	☐

CLOSURE

WORK COMPLETED AT

FINAL INSPECTION TIME

AREA RELEASED AT

FIRE WATCH / OBSERVER

SIGNATURE

TIME

PERMIT ISSUER / AREA OWNER

SIGNATURE

TIME



Corrective Action Register

A recurring hot-work weakness is a management issue, not just a permit issue.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS PERMIT

FINDING / GAP	REQUIRED ACTION	OWNER	DUE	VERIFIED

TYPICAL SYSTEMIC GAPS

Poor housekeeping, recurring combustible storage, defective tools, weak gas-cylinder controls, unclear permit authority, inadequate fire-watch coverage, blocked egress, poor contractor coordination, missing isolation controls or inadequate practical fire-response capability.



Contractor Hot Work Coordination

A contractor permit does not automatically satisfy host-site requirements.

CONTRACTOR DETAILS

CONTRACTOR COMPANY

SUPERVISOR

CONTACT

HOST / CONTRACTOR COORDINATION

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Contractor scope confirmed with host-site responsible person?	☐	☐	☐
Contractor received site fire / emergency rules?	☐	☐	☐
Permit authority and responsibilities agreed?	☐	☐	☐
Contractor competence / authorisation verified under site process?	☐	☐	☐
Contractor equipment accepted under site requirements?	☐	☐	☐
Host-site hazards explained to contractor?	☐	☐	☐
Simultaneous operations / nearby contractors considered?	☐	☐	☐
Alarm, evacuation and assembly arrangements explained?	☐	☐	☐
Permit and fire-watch responsibilities aligned?	☐	☐	☐
Close-out and hand-back requirements agreed?	☐	☐	☐

SITE-SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

ADDITIONAL SITE RULES, EXCLUSIONS, INTERFACES OR PERMIT REFERENCES



WORKED EXAMPLE

Example - Warehouse Bracket Repair

Use this example to understand the logic. Do not copy it without assessing your own site.

SCENARIO

A contractor must grind out a damaged steel bracket and weld a replacement bracket to a conveyor support inside an operating warehouse. Cardboard cartons, timber pallets and shrink wrap are stored nearby.

KEY HAZARDS

- ☐ Grinding sparks reaching packaging and pallets
- ☐ Welding sparks / molten metal dropping below the work
- ☐ Heat transfer through the steel support
- ☐ Workers and forklifts entering the work area
- ☐ Hidden debris behind the conveyor support

EXAMPLE CONTROLS

- 1 Move packaging and pallets out of the spark path before work begins.
- 2 Inspect above, below and behind the bracket; protect openings and immovable combustibles.
- 3 Establish an exclusion zone and coordinate with warehouse operations.
- 4 Verify suitable firefighting equipment and alarm arrangements.
- 5 Appoint a fire watch if required by the risk assessment / site procedure.
- 6 Reinspect after grinding / welding and complete required post-work monitoring before closing the permit.

WHY THIS WORKS

The permit does not merely say fire extinguisher present. It identifies the actual fuel, spark path, affected people, physical controls, responsible persons and final verification steps.



Hot Work System Audit

Use monthly, quarterly or after an incident / near miss according to your own management system.

CHECK / VERIFY	YES	NO	N/A
Do workers know which activities trigger the hot-work procedure?	☐	☐	☐
Are permits job-specific rather than generic or pre-ticked?	☐	☐	☐
Are permits issued before work begins?	☐	☐	☐
Are authorisers inspecting the work area physically?	☐	☐	☐
Are combustibles removed rather than merely acknowledged?	☐	☐	☐
Are contractors integrated into the host-site permit system?	☐	☐	☐
Are fire-watch decisions risk-based and documented?	☐	☐	☐
Are permit expiry and change-of-condition rules understood?	☐	☐	☐
Are post-work checks consistently completed?	☐	☐	☐
Are corrective actions actually closed?	☐	☐	☐
Are recurring hot-work defects being escalated to management?	☐	☐	☐
Do incidents / near misses trigger procedure review?	☐	☐	☐
Are equipment defects removed from service?	☐	☐	☐
Are employees expected to use firefighting equipment suitably trained for their role?	☐	☐	☐

MANAGEMENT CONCLUSION

OVERALL RATING / CONCLUSION

REVIEWER

DATE

PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE HOT-WORK SYSTEM



WHEN THE PERMIT IDENTIFIES A TRAINING GAP

CLOSE THE GAP WITH PRACTICAL FIRE FIGHTING TRAINING

If designated employees may be expected to undertake limited basic workplace fire response, review whether suitable practical training is in place. Training is one control - it does not replace engineering, maintenance, housekeeping, isolation, fire protection or other physical corrective actions.

FIRE FIGHTING COURSE

www.swiftskillsacademy.com/fire-fighting-course-cape-town-saqa-12484

EMPLOYER / ON-SITE ENQUIRIES

021 828 0772 | WhatsApp +27 60 998 7412

IMPORTANT

This employer pack is a general workplace management resource. It does not replace a site-specific risk assessment, applicable legislation, municipal or building requirements, insurance conditions, technical standards, competent-person inspection, engineering controls, hazardous-atmosphere controls or specialist advice. Signature and completion of this pack do not by themselves prove compliance or competence.