

# safety matters

Construction

From your safety partners at Peabody Insurance Agency

## Burn First Aid on the Construction Site

Scalds and burns are potentially life-changing injuries that can lead to severe pain, lost time at work and permanent damage to skin. Hot surfaces, flammable liquids, gas motors, welding equipment and electricity are common burn hazards on the construction site. It is important that you use extreme caution when working with or around these things, and that you know what to do should you or a co-worker get burned.

### For Any Burn

If you or a co-worker experiences any type of burn, immediately take the following steps to minimize the extent of the injury:

- Put out any flames and remove any restrictive jewelry or clothing.
- Check that the victim's airway is open, that the person is breathing and that there are signs of circulation.
- Do not use ice on the burn, as it could cause even more damage.
- Do not apply butter, burn gels, creams or lotions, as they can prevent proper healing.
- Do not break blisters, as they make the victim susceptible to infection.
- If the person has slipped, tripped or fallen, consider that there may be injuries in addition to the burn. To avoid worsening these other injuries, do not move the person excessively.

### Minor Burns

If you or a co-worker suffers a minor burn, which is a first- or second-degree burn that covers only a small part of the body, take the following steps:

- Remove clothing from the affected area.
- Hold the burned area under cool running water for at least five minutes or until pain subsides.

Alternatively, submerge the area in cool water. Cooling the area reduces swelling.

- Loosely wrap the burn with a dry, sterile gauze bandage to protect and keep air off the burned skin. Do not tighten the bandage—you should avoid putting pressure on burned skin.
- If the victim experiences increased pain, redness or fever, which could signal an infection, contact a physician immediately.

### Major Burns

If you or a co-worker experiences second- or third-degree burns over large surfaces of the body or face, hands, feet or the genital area, immediately take the following steps:

- Call 911.
- If burns cover an area the size of an arm or leg, keep the victim lying down.
- Don't immerse large, severe burns in cold water, as it could trigger shock.
- Stay with the victim and watch carefully for signs of difficulty breathing.
- Don't allow the victim to drink anything.
- Elevate the burned area, raising it above heart level if possible.
- Cover the victim with a clean sheet or blanket for warmth.

The most important thing is to be aware of potential burn and scald hazards at all times. Wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times and know where emergency contact information is posted.

**Working on a construction site puts you at particular risk of burns and scalds. Use extreme caution and know what to do should you or a co-worker be burned.**

