# **Compressed Gas Cylinder Safety Fact Sheet**

**Moving**

The majority of incidents and injuries involving gas cylinders occur during handling or transportation. To help prevent incidents when moving cylinders follow these precautions:

* Ensure safety devices, such as caps or guards, are securely installed.
* Follow proper procedures and use the right personal protective / safety equipment (PPE), including safety glasses, heavy-duty gloves and protective footwear.
* Handle cylinders with care and avoid dropping or hitting them against anything.
* Never drag or roll cylinders, always move them with a suitable hand truck, even for short distances.
* Avoid lifting cylinders by their caps or guards or with magnetic slings.

**Using**

* Consult Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for safety information on the gases you are using.
* All cylinders being used must have their contents and precautionary labeling clearly marked on their exteriors.
* Always wear approved PPE including eye protection as recommended by the SDS.
* Open cylinder valves slowly with valve outlet away from you.
* Discharge compressed gases using devices, such as pressure regulators, approved for the gas being used.
* Close the main cylinder valve as soon as it is no longer necessary to have it open.

**Storing**

When storing compressed cylinders:

* Secure cylinders upright with a chain or strap above the middle of the cylinder at all times.
* Group cylinders by the type of gas and segregate by compatibility.
* Store cylinders in cool, dry, well-ventilated areas, away from incompatible materials and ignition sources.
* Store oxygen gas cylinders at least 20 feet from flammable gas cylinders or separate using a noncombustible barrier at least 5 feet high having a fire-resistance rating of at least one-half hour.
* Ensure valves are completely closed and cylinder caps are in place.
* Use proper warning signs in areas where cylinders are stored.
* Store cylinders in a location free from vehicle traffic, excessive heat and electrical circuits.
* Store empty and full cylinders separately. Mark empty cylinders “empty” or “MT”.
* **Note – Propane tanks/cylinders should not be used or stored in a WSU building basement. Consult with Enterprise Risk Management – Fire Safety Office on the proper use and storage of propane at (313) 577-3110.**

For more information, see [Airgas Compressed Gas Safety eBooks](https://www.airgas.com/solutions/training-process-analysis).

