SAFER SPRAY BOOTH FINISHING

Each year, many businesses suffer fire losses due to improper setup, cleaning or maintenance of their spray booth operations involving flammable liquids or materials. Use the following guidelines to help protect your business from preventable fire damage.

Spray booth maintenance

- Protect sprinkler heads
  Sprinkler heads in spray booths need covers, either lightweight paper or plastic bags for protection from overspray. Without these controls, sprinklers may not work reliably in the event of a fire. If the sprinkler head has been painted, it must be replaced.

- Maintaining clean filters
  Monitor filters constantly so you’ll know when they need to be changed. Consider installing a filter gauge that will automatically shut down the spray gun when the filter fails to allow a minimum amount of air to pass through.

- When to clean ventilation ducts
  Rule of thumb: It’s time to clean the ventilation ducts and duct discharge points when residue accumulates to a thickness of 1/8 inch. At that point, shut down the operation until the cleaning is complete.

- Frequent interior cleaning
  All surfaces in the booth should be kept free of combustibles and overspray as much as possible. Clean the surfaces weekly, or as needed. To simplify the cleaning of accumulated overspray, put strippable materials on the interior walls.

Safety precautions

- Safe containers for flammable waste
  Rags or other waste materials that are soaked with finishing or other flammable materials should be put only in self-closing metal waste containers that are approved by a reputable laboratory. Those containers should be emptied daily.

- Use non-sparking tools
  When possible, tools and devices used to clean and maintain the spray booth should be made of nonsparking materials like brass and plastic.

- Mixing combustible coatings
  If you’re using more than one type of combustible coating in the same booth, keep in mind that some coatings, when mixed, can spontaneously ignite. Clean the booth and exhaust ducts of overspray and deposits before you change combustible coatings.

- Use cleaning solvents with high flash points
  Cleaning solvents should have flash points of no lower than 100°F. To reduce the potential for fires, cleaning solvents should be stored in safety cans.
SAFER SPRAY BOOTH FINISHING

» No smoking
   Clearly readable “No Smoking” signs should be posted near all spray booths, solvent or coating storage areas, and any other painting operations.

» Give booths enough space
   Spray booths should be placed a minimum of three (3) feet away from combustible walls, storage areas and other booths. That will help prevent a fire from spreading into a spray booth, or spreading from the spray booth outward.

Spray Booth Safety Features

A) Fire suppression system or sprinklers should be placed in the spray area, behind the filter and in the duct, with control valves open and locked.

B) Solvent rag waste can with self-closing lid (UL/FM approved).

C) Small access door to allow cleaning of ducts. Door should have fitted gaskets to provide a tight vapor seal.

D) Floor area is smooth, noncombustible and waterproof.

E) Smooth, easily-cleaned interior walls.

F) Removable filters that are non-combustible. Filters need to be disposed of correctly.

For more information about American Family’s Safety Consulting Services, visit www.amfam.com

DISCLAIMER
These recommendations were developed using generally accepted safety standards. Compliance with these recommendations is not a guarantee that you will be in conformance with any building code, federal or state regulation regarding safety or fire. Compliance with these recommendations does not ensure the absolute safety of your operation or place of business. It is the property owner’s duty to warn any tenants or occupants of the property of the safety hazards that may exist.