

Oxygen Fire Safety Policy

PURPOSE: This policy has been developed to address the fire safety hazards related to residents who smoke or allow an open flame while using medical oxygen. This practice is an extremely dangerous fire hazard. Oxygen is not flammable, but it can cause other materials that burn to ignite more easily and to burn far more rapidly. The result is that a fire involving oxygen can appear explosive-like. Oxygen is of great benefit to those in need of oxygen therapy but it should always be handled with caution and awareness of potential hazards.

SCOPE: The Oxygen Fire Safety Policy is in effect for all housing authority residents.

STATEMENT OF POLICY: It is the policy of the Housing Authority to fully comply with, and to enforce the safety guidelines and quantity limits for the use of medical oxygen by residents of the housing authority.

SAFETY GUIDELINES: In order to prevent personal injuries and also to prevent the potential for a serious fire to housing authority property, the following safety guidelines should be complied with at all times:

- **Never smoke while using oxygen.**
- Warn visitors not to smoke near you when you are using oxygen.
- Post at least one **OXYGEN IN USE/NO SMOKING** sign in a prominent place at the entrance to your home.
- Stay at least 5 feet from gas stoves, candles, lighted fireplaces, and other heat sources.
- Keep oxygen cylinders and vessels in a well-ventilated area (not in closets, behind curtains, or other confined spaces). The small amount of oxygen gas that is continually vented from these units can accumulate in a confined space and become a fire hazard.
- Secure oxygen cylinders and vessels to a fixed object or place in a stand.
- Oxygen cylinders and vessels must remain upright at all times. Never tip an oxygen cylinder or vessel on its side or try to roll it to a new location.
- Always operate oxygen cylinders or container valves slowly. Abrupt starting and stopping of oxygen flow may ignite any contaminant that might be in the system.
- Turn the cylinder valve off when not using your oxygen.
- Only use properly grounded wall outlets for your oxygen concentrator.
- Do not use extension cords for your oxygen concentrator.
- Do not place the electrical cord or oxygen tubing under rugs or furniture.
- Do not use any flammable products like cleaning fluids, paint thinner, or aerosol sprays while using your oxygen.
- Keep all grease, oil and petroleum products (even small amounts) and flammable materials away from your oxygen equipment. Some organic materials can react violently with oxygen if ignited by a hot spark.
- Use water-based lubricants on your lips and hands. Don't use an oil-based product like petroleum jelly, petroleum based creams, or lotions.

- Do not use bedding or clothes made of wool, nylon, or synthetic fabrics as these materials have the tendency to produce static electricity. The use of cotton material bedding and clothes will help avoid sparks from static electricity.
- Do not allow children or untrained individuals to handle or operate oxygen equipment.
- Always have your gas supplier's number handy.

QUANTITY LIMITS:

- Do not use individual compressed gas oxygen cylinders that exceed 250 cubic feet at a normal temperature and pressure.
- Do not use liquid oxygen vessels that exceed 10 gallons.

POLICY REVIEW: Residents of the housing authority who violate the safety guidelines and quantity limits can be subject to eviction. This policy will be subject to review and modification.

Resolution #2011-02 April 18, 2011