TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Effective January 2005

PRODUCT DATA: #202.2
SUBJECT: WELDING ON FLUID FILM®
COATED SURFACES

PREPARATION:

Under all circumstances, verify that tank interior is gas free.

The determination of the tank as gas-free is necessary, as mud and sludge in the tank bottom may produce methane and ethane gas by bacterial action. Fuel and/or solvent cleaners may have been inadvertently introduced, creating an explosive atmosphere within the air space of the tank. This should be determined with a standard calibrated explosimeter.

Particular attention should be paid to removing any pockets of flammable gas which may accumulate in "dead-air" spaces beneath the overhead, especially if work is to be performed near the area.

Make certain that no combustible materials, such as wooden staging or rags, are in areas where hot slag could ignite them.

While the usual precautionary measures should be followed in connection with any welding or burning, it is recommended that any tanks on which hot work is to be performed should be completely ballasted, at least twice, with clean sea water.

FLUID FILM® Liquid A and Liquid AR have a Flash Point of 315^{0}F, COC, and FLUID FILM® Gel B, 405^{0}F, COC.

When welding, cutting or burning of steel whose surface, front or back, is coated with FLUID FILM®, the coating should be wiped with rags or scraped with a wooden tool for a distance of four feet (1.25 meters) from the point or line of hot work. A squeegee with a flexible rubber or plastic wiper blade is suitable and more rapid for preparation of larger areas.

At times it may be desirable to remove the material for a distance greater than four feet, to provide additional working area. When extensive hot work is to be performed on the tank overhead, it is advised that the area below be covered with a layer of clean water to quench any falling hot slag.

If burning of welding is to be performed on a vertical surface, heat conduction may cause the coating above to melt and flow into the path of the flame. If this occurs, work should immediately be stopped, and the melted material cleared , before resuming.

Maintain proper fire watch.

When cutting a section, such as a disk, out of a metal plate coated on the back side with FLUID FILM®, a pilot hole should be drilled on the perimeter of the cut to minimize time requirements for penetration by the torch. Drilling several holes will also allow for the venting of any flammable gas trapped directly under the overhead.

If the section to be removed is not too large, fashion a handle of a welding rod and tack weld it to the plate, to prevent the section from falling into the coated tank.

AFTER COMPLETION:

When hot work is completed, new welds should be chipped of slag, wire brushed, and washed with a wet rag, to remove salts from welding rod fluxes which interfere with adhesion.

FLUID FILM® should be replaced on the dry steel by brush application or other suitable method. It is recommended that FLUID FILM® Gel BW be used for this purpose.

SAFETY REGULATIONS:

The following excerpts are taken from OSHA safety regulations:

29 CFR, Section 1915.23 (b) (2)
"Flame or heat shall not be used to remove soft and greasy preservation coatings."

29 CFR, Section 1915.32
(f) "When welding, cutting or heating is performed on tank shells, decks, overheads and bulkheads, since direct penetration of sparks or heat transfer may introduce a fire hazard to an adjacent compartment, the same precautions shall be taken on the opposite side on which the welding is being performed."
(g) "The gas supply of the torch shall be positively shut off at some point outside the confined space whenever the torch is not to be used or whenever the torch is left unattended for a substantial period of time, such as during the lunch hour.

29 CFR, Section 1915.33 (d)
"Before welding, cutting or heating is commenced in enclosed spaces on metals covered by soft and greasy preservatives, the following precautions shall be taken:

1. A competent person shall test the atmosphere in the space to ensure that it does not contain explosive vapors.....

2. The preservative coatings shall be removed for sufficient distance from the area to be heated to ensure that the temperature of the unstripped metal will not be appreciably raised. Artificial cooling of the metal surrounding the heated area may be used to limit the size of the area required to be cleaned."

Keep out of reach of children.

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