

# LOSS CONTROL NEWSLETTER

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## Hazard Labels: Gas Cylinder Pictogram



The chemicals you work with may be hazardous, and each can pose unique health and safety risks. For that reason, you should know the proper way to handle and store each chemical that you work with. The chemical's safety data sheet (SDS) is an important source of detailed information, including hazards, composition, safe handling practices, and emergency control measures. Make sure you read the SDS of any chemical thoroughly before working with it.

There can also be labels directly on the container a chemical is stored in. You should always read the written precautionary statements on each chemical container label. A container label may also have one or more pictograms. Pictograms are symbolic representations to help you quickly identify a chemical's hazards. A pictogram is easy to spot; it is a black image on a white background that is framed by a red diamond. There are nine different pictograms, each representing a different hazard. In this issue, we're going to discuss the gas cylinder pictogram.

**Hazards:** The gas cylinder pictogram is a symbol with an image of a black silhouette of a gas cylinder on a white background framed by a red diamond. If you see this pictogram on a chemical label affixed to a container, it means that the chemical is a gas under pressure. The contents of a gas cylinder may be a compressed gas, liquefied gas, refrigerated liquefied gas, or dissolved gas. The gas can be rapidly released if the cylinder is damaged, causing the cylinder to take off like an out-of-control rocket. In a recent incident at a fencing contractor, a worker was killed when the gas cylinder he was moving exploded. Deliberately released gases can also cause problems if the release is poorly controlled, causing vessels, hoses, or pipes to rupture.

Compressed gases can present other hazards – they may be flammable, reactive, toxic, or corrosive. If the cylinder contains a refrigerated liquefied gas, you are at risk of a cryogenic burn or frostbite injury. In addition, leaking gases can displace air and reduce oxygen levels, which can lead to loss of consciousness or suffocation.

**Handling and storage:** Improper handling can damage cylinders, resulting in accidental releases. You should always protect the cylinder from physical damage, including falling objects or bumps from other cylinders. Ensure the protective caps are on and the

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## A GUIDE TO FIRST-AID KITS

Do you know where the first-aid kit is located in your facility? The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements for first-aid kits only apply to certain industries. However, in general industry, including office spaces, adequate first-aid supplies should be readily available to you.

First-aid supplies should be kept in one place and include everything necessary to treat minor cuts, scrapes, and burns – gauze, bandages, first-aid tape, and antibiotic ointment. A kit may also contain a CPR one-way valve face shield, aspirin, hydrocortisone, instant cold compresses, scissors, and tweezers.

Once a kit is made or purchased, it cannot be forgotten about – it needs to be maintained so that it will actually be useful during an unexpected emergency. Employers or the staff responsible for the kit should inspect it at least once a year. The kit should be kept organized, expired items should be thrown away, and any items that are running low should be restocked.

*If you have any questions or need assistance regarding workplace safety, please contact your independent insurance agent or the Auto-Owners Loss Control Helpline at 855.586.5388, or send an email to [LossControlSupport@aoins.com](mailto:LossControlSupport@aoins.com).*

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## Gas Cylinder Labels *continued*

cylinders are always secured, even during transport. Cylinders can be secured to racks, walls, or approved hand trucks by a strong chain or strap. Always use approved equipment to move compressed gas cylinders – do not drag or roll cylinders horizontally.

Store gas cylinders in well-ventilated areas. Keep cylinders away from direct sunlight, excessive heat, and ignition sources. Compressed gas cylinders should also be secured during storage to prevent them from falling or being knocked over. There may be additional storage requirements, including separation distances and maximum storage quantities – always consult the SDS for more information.