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6/06

APPLICATOR BULLETIN FIRE PREVENTION AND JOBSITE SAFETY

We recommend the following steps to insure a safer worksite when polyurethane foam is applied:

1. Persons handling foam system chemicals or involved in the foam application should always first read and understand the required Material Safety Data Sheet and physical property bulletin for the system being applied.
2. Spraying foams too thick in single passes can build dangerously high temperatures inside the finished foam which could lead to splitting, charring or even spontaneous combustion. NCFI recommends that spray pass thickness not exceed two inches for closed celled foams or twelve inches for open celled foams. If multiple passes are sprayed, sufficient time should be allowed for the exothermic heat to dissipate before each additional pass is applied. For specific recommendations, contact NCFI.
3. The foam applicator/contractor must make the building owner, architect, general contractor, and other trades working on site aware of the combustibility of polyurethane foam, and the fire hazards it can present if misused.
4. Polyurethane foam, when applied to the interiors of buildings, must be covered by an approved 15-minute thermal barrier in compliance with applicable building codes.
5. All welding, cutting torch and other hot work (such as pipefitting), should be finished prior to any foam application.
6. Warning signs should be posted prohibiting hot work or the use of ignition sources once foam application commences. The building owner should have these signs permanently mounted in the building for the benefit for maintenance, repair or contractor personnel doing future work.
7. Ignition sources should not be permitted on or near polyurethane foam. Alternate methods not using welding or cutting torches should be used. If alternate methods of cutting or fastening cannot be done practically, foam and other combustible materials should be removed from the area before any hot work is performed. Refer to Factory Mutual Loss Prevention Data 9-5/15-1 on Hot Work for more detailed precautions.
8. On commercial and industrial construction sites where the thermal barrier is not yet been installed on interior spray polyurethane foam, and the potential exists for the use of cutting torches, welding, or other hot work, we recommend that a responsible person be posted and charged with the authority to prevent such hot work until the thermal barrier is installed.
9. All parties involved, including the building owner, should sign off that these precautions have been taken. Refer to Factory Mutual Loss Prevention Data 1-0, Safeguards During Construction, Alteration, and Demolition.

Contact NCFI for more information.