



Oxygen Storage Policy

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1		
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Background

This policy provides the basic instruction for the safe handling, use and transportation of oxygen within the Practice. In all cases, staff who are handling oxygen are to be familiar with the supplier's instructions for the safe use and storage of oxygen equipment, and they are to follow these whenever the equipment is used.

The supplier is *BOC*

The routine telephone number of the supplier is 0800 111333

The emergency telephone number of the supplier is 0800 111333

Staff who are not involved with the handling of the equipment are also to be familiar with the sections of the supplier's instructions dealing with safe storage. This policy is not designed as a substitute for those procedures.

Oxygen may be contained within large cylinders for therapeutic use and / or may be in smaller cylinders contained within emergency bags, response kits etc., the following basic procedures are emphasised.

Hazard Control

Oxygen supports combustion. Oxygen enrichment of the air can arise unless good handling practices are used. Enrichment of the air by even a small amount can significantly increase the risk of fire caused by heat, sparks, static electricity or other sources of ignition.

Oil and grease can ignite spontaneously in the presence of oxygen, and these should not be used to lubricate oxygen equipment, valves etc. The use of hand creams and lubricants of any kind are to be avoided when handling cylinders. No sealant, tape or other means, which has not been provided as part of original equipment is to be used.

Smoking is forbidden in areas where oxygen is used or stored.

Storage areas must display No Smoking / Naked Flame signage and signs must be posted to indicate that oxygen is stored.

In the event of a significant escape of oxygen electrical supplies should be isolated at the main supply and potential sources of ignition removed.

In the event of an oxygen related fire the use of extinguishers should be restricted to water, dry powder or CO₂. Cylinders may be sprayed with water to keep them cool.

Should a cylinder or item require attention or repair this must only be carried out by the Suppliers service personnel.

Storage

Large cylinders should be stored upright in a well ventilated, external and secure area, and they must be secured to prevent them from falling. Full cylinders must be separated from empty ones, and all valves are to be closed (even on empty cylinders).

Cylinders are only to be moved by delivery personnel.

Small cylinders (e.g. in emergency bags) may be stored indoors, horizontally if necessary, however they should be returned to an upright position as soon as possible prior to use.

Transportation

Cylinders may be carried within cars subject to the following conditions:

- Any car in which an oxygen cylinder is to be carried will also contain a CO₂ fire extinguisher (1kg minimum)
- Only small cylinders for emergency use will be permitted in cars
- While not in use all valves will be firmly closed and attachments removed
- The cylinders must at all times remain within the transportation bags supplied to prevent damage and movement
- Cylinders will not be used within a car, and must be removed outside if this is to take place
- No smoking is permitted in cars whilst oxygen is being carried
- In the event of a suspected leak the engine is to be stopped and all doors and windows opened to increase ventilation
- Cylinders will not be left in cars where temperatures are likely to be excessive (e.g. in the summer sun)
- A risk assessment hazard data sheet provided by the oxygen supplier is to be kept in the car at all times to be made available to the emergency service in the event of an accident or incident