



Safety Hazard Alert



Vehicle Tool Compartment Explosion

On May 7, 2005, a contractor employee received injuries when an acetylene cylinder exploded at a cement operation. The victim and a co-worker had just parked their utility body service truck and used a 12 volt, wireless remote, key fob to unlock the tool compartments. When the lock mechanism activated, an explosion occurred inside one of the tool compartments propelling the door approximately 40 feet. The employee closest to the truck suffered a broken finger. Fifteen days prior to the accident, a full, 20 pound acetylene cylinder (that did not have a protective cover) had been placed inside the tool compartment. The cylinder was found to be $\frac{3}{4}$ full, after the accident. Tests showed that the valve would leak if slightly bumped. As a result of the accident, the manufacturer of the utility bodies will attach stickers to all utility body doors constructed in the future warning persons against storing flammable materials inside the compartments.



Best Practices

- Ensure that flammable gases or liquids are not stored in any enclosure or vehicle that utilizes wireless, remote door locks.
- Periodically conduct tests to identify leaks on gauges, hoses, and compressed gas cylinders.
- Ensure that compressed gas cylinders are stored in ventilated areas and protective valve covers are installed when the cylinders are transported or stored.
- Train all personnel regarding safe handling, use and storage of flammable liquids and compressed gases.