



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service  
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

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Notice No. 126

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Welding/Burning Accidents

The Risk and Safety Analysis Unit of Minerals Management Service's (MMS) Regional Office for Rules and Production in Metairie, Louisiana, has completed a review and analysis of 90 welding/burning related accidents. These accidents occurred in the Gulf of Mexico between January 1, 1968, and September 30, 1983, and resulted in 18 fatalities and 64 injuries. The major findings of the MMS review are as follows:

1. Welding/burning accidents are more likely to take place on a production platform than on a drilling facility.
2. The welding operations, as opposed to burning operations, pose a greater risk to human life.
3. The two main causes of welding/burning related accidents are: (1) lack of proper site preparation, coordination, and supervision (29 percent), and (2) failure to properly isolate potential sources of fuel and maintain a hazard-free work area (41 percent).

To reduce the risks and hazards associated with welding/burning operations, lessees, operators, and contractors should review their General Welding, Burning, and Hot Tapping Plan and the requirements of OCS Order No. 5, Section 5.4, "Welding and Burning Practices and Procedures."

All personnel in charge of welding/burning operations, and all personnel performing these operations should be thoroughly familiar with and follow the above plan and requirements.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Regional Supervisor

Rules and Production