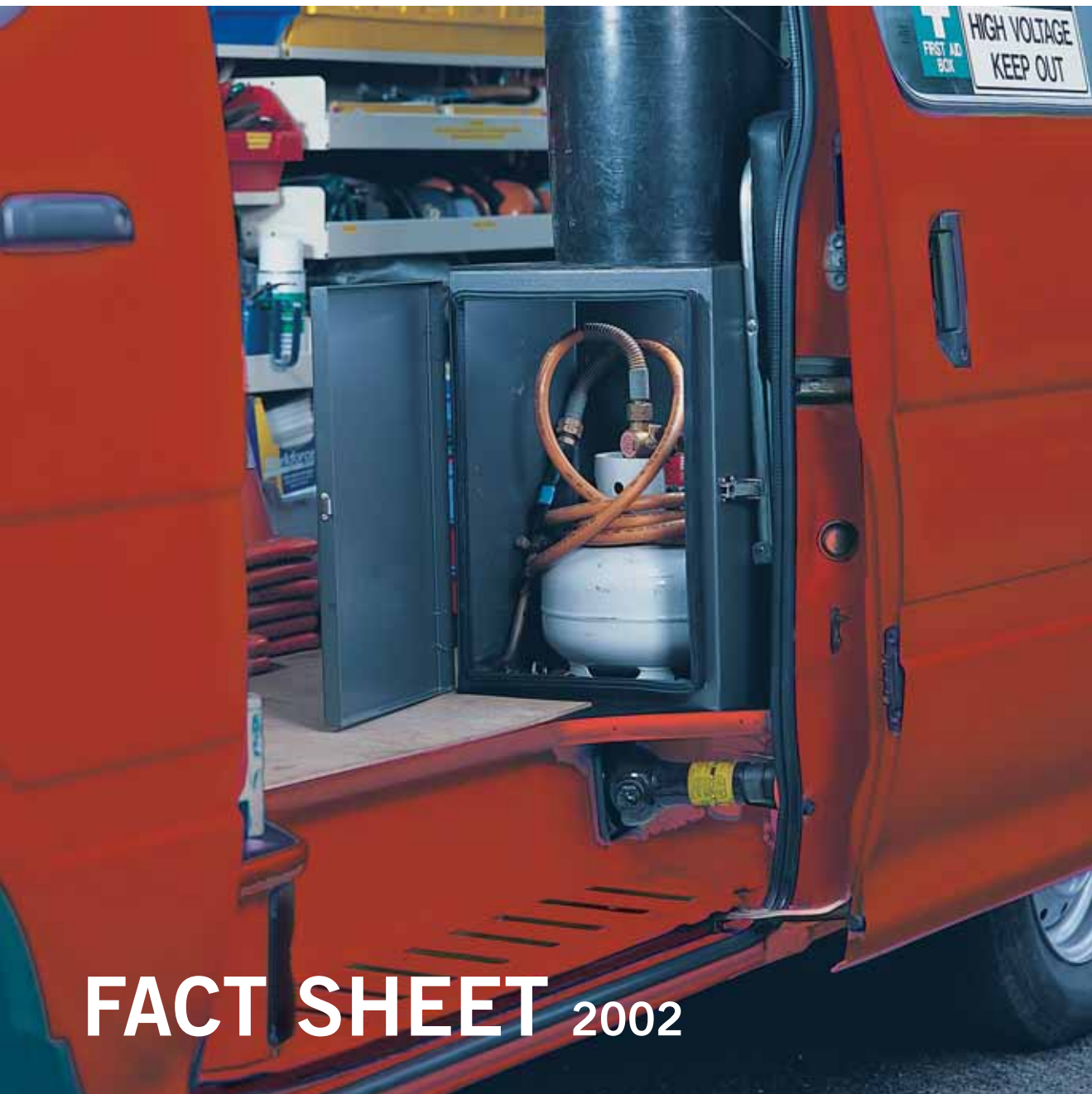


TRANSPORTING OF SMALL GAS CYLINDERS



SAFE TRANSPORTING OF SMALL GAS CYLINDERS OF FLAMMABLE GAS FOR YOUR OWN USE

This fact sheet is for motorists or trades people using flammable gases (e.g. LP Gas (propane) or acetylene), and who transport small cylinders in their own vehicles.

Examples of small cylinders are typically those of the type used with barbecues (4.5 and 9 kg of LP Gas), acetylene cylinders (E size), and cartridges and aerosols designed for use with attachments.

Dangers

Serious accidents have resulted from gas leaking from cylinders while inside trade vehicles or cars. Leaking gas can explode when ignited - injuring the driver and damaging the vehicle. Leaks can occur if the valves used to regulate the flow of gas are not properly turned off or are faulty.

Ignition sources can include electrical equipment in the vehicle, for example, using a remote locking mechanism. Lighting a cigarette in or near the vehicle could also ignite the gas.

How to transport small gas cylinders

Ventilation is the key to reducing risk of fire or explosion.

Don't

- Transport or keep cylinders in an unventilated van, unless in a purpose built compartment or cabinet.
- Permanently store cylinders inside vehicles unless suitable ventilation is provided.
- Attach the cylinder to the external body of the vehicle because of the potential risk of damage in a collision.

Do

- Check for leaks from valves, connections and equipment by applying soapy water and looking for bubbles. Smell alone is not a reliable test, even though LP Gas is odourised. Relying on the valves to prevent leakage during transport is not sufficient on its own.
- Ensure windows of the vehicle are wound down for cross flow ventilation.
- If you are transporting the cylinder inside a trade vehicle, keep the cylinder in a purpose built compartment or cabinet that provides adequate drainage or ventilation of any leaking gas to the outside of the vehicle. A side-mounted compartment with its own door (for example a well-side body) is suitable, provided the cylinder remains upright. Alternatively, an open vehicle such as a utility provides the best ventilation and avoids the risks of gas accumulation.
- Secure cylinders and keep them upright (the exception is those designed to be mounted on forklifts, but only when kept with the correct "TOP" orientation).
- Unload the cylinder from inside the vehicle immediately on reaching your destination, unless the vehicle has a suitable compartment or cabinet.

Choosing suitable cabinets or compartments

The compartment or cabinet, which houses the cylinders, should be equipped to ventilate any escaping gas outside the vehicle and away from potential ignition sources.

Check that venting is not damaged or obstructed.

If the cylinder is accessed from inside the vehicle, the cabinet door should provide a gas tight seal. Compartments accessed from the outside (similar to those used on caravans and mobile homes) are suitable.

After using gas

When returning cylinders or cartridges to the vehicle after use:

- Close the main cylinder valve, if it has one, and/or disconnect any equipment or appliance. Some designs rely on the removal of the attachments to close the valve.
- Check for leaks from valves, connections and equipment by applying soapy water and looking for bubbles. Smell alone is not a reliable test, even though LP Gas is odourised. **Remember!!** Relying on the valves to prevent leakage during transport is not sufficient on its own.
- Ensure ventilation in the vehicle is adequate.

Refilling cylinders

When buying a gas refill, ask the supplier to test the valve for leaks before loading the cylinder into your vehicle.

Storage of small cylinders

Gas cylinders should not be stored in an unventilated enclosed space. For example, an unventilated garage, shed or other area is not suitable.

Safe storage conditions for various gases are set out in relevant Australian Standards such as AS/NZS 1596:2002 *Storage and handling of LP Gas*, including the threshold limits for quantities allowed to be stored indoors under various circumstances as “minor quantities”.

If you need to keep a substantial amount of gas in storage, contact WorkCover to find out what notification procedures may be required.

For more information and publications phone Workcover on 13 10 50.

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