

1. *CHANGES TO CYLINDER COLOUR CODES*

During our compressed gases safety training courses, we have, for quite a few years, been suggesting that changes to the familiar U.K. and Republic of Ireland cylinder colour codes would eventually come along as a result of harmonising European standards; it seems that the process of doing this has finally begun to gain some momentum amongst your gas supply companies.

The important thing to bear in mind is that the changeover process will be very gradual (estimated at taking to 5 years to complete) and, during the changeover period, cylinders with the old (BS 349) and new (EN 1089-3) colour codes will be in circulation - perhaps they'll stand shoulder to shoulder on many sites. It is also noteworthy that the new European way of doing things mainly affects the cylinder SHOULDER colour code.

For example, many of you will already have become familiar with your [vapour withdrawal] carbon dioxide cylinders appearing with a sort of silvery grey shoulder as opposed to both the cylinder and its shoulders being black.

Similar, key changes to spot are as follows:

OXYGEN will acquire white shoulders - much like medical oxygen cylinders have looked for many years.

ARGON will be seen in bright green throughout - compared to the all blue livery it's enjoyed for so long.

NITROGEN will tend to lose the familiar white spot but the grey body and black shoulders will stay.

COMPRESSED AIR, formerly noted for its all grey livery, will gain a natty bright green shoulder band!

HOWEVER, the following cylinders will, apparently, remain UNCHANGED:

ACETYLENE, HYDROGEN, HELIUM & PROPANE. LIQUID WITHDRAWAL CARBON DIOXIDE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE A WHITE STRIPE PAINTED DOWN IT'S SIDE BUT WILL GAIN A SILVERY GREY SHOULDER (as mentioned above for vapour withdrawal cylinders).

At present, I am not aware that there is any plan to revise the cylinder valve outlet connections along with these colour code changes. You may though have been in receipt of cylinders filled to 300 barg for some time now and many of these have the 'NEVOC' (new European valve outlet connections) fitted e.g. helium. This measure was taken to ensure that cylinders filled to 300 barg couldn't be connected to gas control equipment of an inadequate inlet pressure rating.

SO, ULTIMATELY, NOTHING HAS CHANGED - ALWAYS USE/READ THE LABEL: - THE LABEL, AS BEFORE, IS THE PRIMARY MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION.

Also, and quite obviously, if you are still unclear on this matter please contact your gas supply company(ies), who, I am confident, would be delighted to put you straight.

2. *NEW PRODUCT - LEAK DETECTIVE*

At last! It's taken a good wee while but we've finally found it. As you'll appreciate, testing for gas leaks is a central plank of working safely with cylinders, manifolds, regulators, etc. Moreover, the use of a leak detection solution that is approved for use with all compressed gases **including** oxygen is vital. Our new leak detection spray is non-corrosive, oxygen safe, ozone friendly and very economical; offering up to 1,000 applications per 400ml can!

As I've explained to many of you in the past, such products are relatively few and far between. There are many leak detection products on the market but so many of them are aimed at those working on compressed air, natural gas, refrigerant, etc. systems and, as such, these products would not always be oxygen safe.

Our leak detection spray is manufactured in Germany and consists of de-ionised water and small quantity of an approved tenside [anionic] surfactant to act the foaming agent; the propellant is air. N.B. Some other products, deemed to be oxygen safe, use nitrous oxide as the propellant and this, we believe, is less desirable.

LEAK DETECTIVE

Leak detection spray
Oxygen safe. For use all compressed
gases. Application of small amount
quickly reveals small leaks.
PRICE: £7.50 + VAT & delivery



Please note: if would like more information relating to this product or
it's counterpart which has been designed for very low temperature use
(e.g. MSDS) then please give me a call: Office tel: 01909 501771.
Mobile: 07973 158287 or drop me an e-mail.

3. AND FINALLY...

For all those of us who are involved in Hot Work, we recognise (I trust) that contaminated plant (vessels, pipes, etc.) SHALL prior to the application of heat be firstly purged and cleaned or secondly made inert. Pretty straightforward isn't it?

However, from 'The Mirror' 26.10.01:-

"FLYING METAL DISC CHAOS

A half-ton piece of metal shot through a housing estate leaving a half-mile trail of destruction. The six-foot oval disc from the back of a [road] petrol tanker smashed into a house and wrecked two chimneys and two fences before landing in a pensioner's garden. Shrapnel-like shards flew into a nearby children's playground. The disc was blasted into the air after a welder at a nearby yard ignited traces of ammonia. No one was injured in the incident in Rotherham on Monday. A fire service spokesman said: 'Luckily no one was in it's path.'"

So, confined vapour cloud explosions do occur and, yet again, common sense doesn't always prevail.

Best regards, David Bayliss.

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