**22 ways to keep flammable liquids from incinerating your business**

When I was younger I dated a gent who was too impatient to build a braai like every other person. His favourite method for preparing the fire was to pour turps or paraffin over the charcoal, light a match and toss it in. The resulting inferno meant we usually had to wait longer than usual to cook our meat because the flames were just too hot!

Now, this is an example of carelessness when it comes to flammable liquid, but the fact is some of us need to use it to do our jobs. Here are the 22 requirements you must fulfill to use flammable liquids.

1. Custom build the room, cabinet or enclosure where you use the substance with fire-resistant material (*GSR 4(2), OHSA*).
2. Don’t allow the creation of a fire or explosion hazard. You must extract flammable or explosive vapours from the room (*GSR 4(2)(a), OHSA*).
3. Effectively disperse or dilute the vapours from its use or application into the atmosphere by providing extraction fans (*GSR 4(2)(b), OHSA*).
4. Don’t contaminate any other part of your workplace with the vapour. The extraction’s outlet must lead into the atmosphere and not into another room in the workplace (*GSR 4(2)(c), OHSA*).
5. Provide effective intake and exhaust ventilators to remove all flammable vapours from the store, cabinet or enclosure (*GSR 4(3), OHSA*).
6. If the air supply and extraction is horizontal, the average air speed measured 1.5m above floor level must be at least 0.5 metres per second (*GSR 4(4)(a), OHSA*).
7. If the air supply is vertical and extraction is done through slits or a grill along the side wall at floor level, the average air speed measured 1.5m above floor level must be at least 0.4 metres per second (*GSR 4(4)(b), OHSA*).
8. If the air supply is vertical and extraction is done through a grill over the whole of the floor area, the average air speed measured 1.5m above floor level must be at least 0.3 metres per second (*GSR 4(4)(c), OHSA*).
9. Provide every employee spraying flammable liquid with a suitable respirator, mask or breathing apparatus.
10. All ducts trunks and enclosures must be of fire-resistant material, of a smooth interior finish and you must regularly clean these (*GSR 6(a), OHSA*).
11. Keep the ventilation system going during working hours and after hours for at least the period of time it takes to clear the vapour from the room’s atmosphere to below 25 % of the lower explosive limit of that vapour (*GSR 6(b), OHSA*).
12. Don’t obstruct the flow of air towards the intake of the ventilation and draw the spray or vapour away from any employee operating the equipment (*GSR 6(c), OHSA*). Do this by instructing the spray to be directed towards the extraction intake.
13. If the floor area exceeds 20 square metres, the room must have at least two separate entrances at two opposite sides of the room with doors opening outwards that can’t be locked (*GSR 7(a), OHSA*).
14. Fit the room with an inspection window of strengthened or shatterproof glass that no one can open (*GSR 7(b), OHSA*).
15. You and your employees may not take any fire, flame, naked light or static producing item into the room. Post “no smoking” and “no open flames” signs indicating such prohibitions at all the entrances to the room (*GSR 8(a)(i), OHSA*).
16. Don’t allow any smoking in such a room and you must post signs prohibiting smoking at all the entrances to the room (*GSR 8(a)(ii), OHSA*).
17. Employees may not conduct any process capable of sparks or fire or apply any application of heat to dry the sprayed items before the atmosphere has been cleared of all vapour (*GSR 8(a)(iii), OHSA*).
18. Clear and safely dispose of all waste from the room daily (*GSR 9(a), OHSA*).
19. You may only keep one day’s requirement of flammable liquid in the room (*GSR 9(b), OHSA*).
20. You must tightly close the containers in which you partially store flammables or where you also keep other stock when not in use and safely remove and dispose of empty containers daily (*GSR 9(c), OHSA*).
21. Keep the room, all fans, ducts, trunks and enclosures clean and in good working order (*GSR 9(d), OHSA*).
22. Use tools that don’t cause sparking to clean, scrape or scour (*GSR 9(d), OHSA*).