Section 45.1-161.205.F. **Storage and Use of Flammable Fluids and Materials**

This section of the MSA addresses standards for the use of oxygen and acetylene bottles and safe handling and storage practices.

When oxygen and acetylene bottles are used underground, work activities can be extensive and require several hours or shifts to complete. While being used, bottles and torches must be located in a safe place to prevent damage to bottle stems and hoses. The hoses and gages do not have to be disconnected while work activities are in progress. The bottles are to be considered in use as long as work is in progress. The bottles would not be considered in use if work activities have been completed and persons performing the work exit the working place. When work activities are completed and the bottles are no longer in use the bottles must be unhooked, capped, and stored as required by the MSA.

When oxygen and acetylene bottles are used at the surface of an underground mine or at surface mines and are adequately secured, the regulators can remain attached for several hours or shifts so that personnel at underground coal mine shops and at surface mines can make use of equipment during a shift or shift work activities.

Because some mine sites operate seven days per week and on all three shifts, gauges and torches can remain attached to bottles from shift to shift or day to day as work activities dictate, though when no one is scheduled to work a shift, the torches and gauges should be disconnected and the bottles capped. Bottles and torches are to be considered in use during each active shift where personnel are in the shop, work area of the shop, or other surface coal mine work location.

See also guidelines for Storage and Flammable Fluids and Materials Article 5, Section 45.1-161.267.L. and Article 15, Section 45.1-161.238.D.