

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Safe Use of Manual Gas Bottle Sack Trucks

1. Purpose

This SOP provides guidelines for the safe operation, handling, and maintenance of manual gas bottle sack trucks to ensure the safety of personnel.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees, contractors, and visitors who operate or move loads using manual gas bottle sack trucks within your company.

3. Responsibilities

- **Operators/Users:** Follow this SOP at all times when handling sack trucks designed for carrying gas bottles.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Ensure employees are trained, equipment is inspected, and safe practices are followed.
- **Maintenance Staff:** Conduct regular inspections and repairs of sack trucks.

4. Equipment Covered

- Manual Gas Bottle Sack Trucks

5. Procedure

5.1 Pre-Operational Checks

- Inspect sack truck for defects (wheels, frame, handle, toe plate, securing chains).
- Check the sack truck is suitable for gas cylinders (curved backrest, cylinder restraints).
- Check load capacity rating – do not exceed manufacturer's limit.
- Ensure pathway is clear of obstructions, spills, or uneven surfaces. Ensure that your route is well planned.

5.2 Preparing the Cylinder

- Check the cylinder valve is closed and the protective cap is fitted.
- Make sure the cylinder is not leaking or damaged.
- Do not move cylinders with hoses or regulators attached.
- Only handle cylinders that are within the UDL weight capacity listed on the Sack Truck.

5.3 Loading the Sack Truck

- Use the correct manual handling technique (bend knees, keep back straight).
- Avoid lifting the gas bottle. Simply tilt the gas bottle and wheel the sack truck under the load, assistance maybe required.
- Position the cylinder upright on the toe plate, into the cradle of the back.
- Secure the gas bottle using suitable straps or chains before tilting the sack truck backwards.
- Never carry more cylinders than the truck is designed for.

5.4 Operating the Sack Truck

- Keep control of the sack truck at all times.
- Push the sack truck rather than pulling where possible. Pull only if space is restricted.
- Move slowly and avoid sudden movements.
- Do not bump cylinders over kerbs, steps or rough ground.
- Never leave cylinders unattended on a Sack Truck.

5.5 Parking and Storage

- Take cylinders directly to the designated storage area.
- Store cylinders securely in a rack, gas bottle cage or chained to a wall in a designated area.
- Ensure storage locations are well-ventilated.
- Do not store near heat sources or combustible materials.
- Never leave gas cylinders unsecured on a sack truck.

5.6 Slopes and Ramps

- Going down a hill, keep the sack truck in front with you behind.
- When going up a slope, pull the truck behind you with you in front.
- Take extra care and move slowly to stay in control.
- Try to avoid adverse camber and travelling sideways on hills, especially with tall loads that may tip.

6. Safety Precautions

- Always wear appropriate PPE (e.g., gloves, safety shoes).
- High visibility clothing is always recommended.
- Do not overload or use a sack truck for purposes other than intended.
- Avoid using on steep inclines or unsuitable surfaces.
- Seek assistance for heavy, awkward, or oversized loads or when loading.
- Be alert to the presence of other people and vehicles.

7. Training

- All employees must complete manual handling induction on employment.
- Refresher training should be provided as needed.

8. Records

- Inspection checklists
- Training attendance records
- Maintenance/repair logs

This is a generic document and should be used as a guidance document, every site and every situation is different and should be treated as such.