

FDN(wh)Y Me?

As an aid to laboratories in avoiding FDNY Violation Orders (VO) and Summonses (SUM), EH&S distributes monthly FDNY inspection findings which resulted in a VO or NOV citation to an actual CU laboratory on either Morningside or Medical Center campus. These real life scenarios are meant to assist you in ensuring that such conditions do not exist in your laboratory.

September 2023

Safe Practices for Compressed Gas Cylinder Storage

During a regular weekly inspection of Columbia University laboratories, the FDNY Inspector issued a violation to a lab for its failure to secure a compressed gas cylinder. The contents of compressed gas cylinders are under significant pressure and can result in substantial harm to persons and property if the cylinder is damaged. Cylinder valves could become damaged if they are knocked over. As such, cylinders must always be handled with caution, and must always be restrained as follows:

1. To a fixed object with one or more noncombustible restraints (Note: cylinders shall not be secured to plumbing systems or electrical conduits).
2. On a cart or other mobile device specifically designed for the movement of compressed gas cylinders.
3. Within a rack, framework, cabinet or similar assembly designed for such use (i.e. floor base holder).

To have a bracket installed on a bench top or to have a chain/strap installed into the wall, please contact Facilities at 212-854-2222 (Morningside) or 212-305-4357 x3 (CUIMC).

Examples of cylinder securement methods:



Chain



Strap



Floor



Bench

Regulators are often used with cylinders and offer safety benefits. Regulators reduce the pressure of the stored gas to a lower pressure that can be used safely in laboratories; always use a regulator designed for compatibility with the contents of the cylinder that it will be attached to. The regulator should also be replaced with the protective cap when the cylinder is not in active use in order to minimize the chance of a release or damage to the cylinder's valve.

Please note, the FDNY Laboratory Safety Unit will be on-site weekly at the Morningside and Medical Center campuses. For a consultation before the FDNY inspector gets around to your lab, or for any question, concern, or help, please [contact a Safety Advisor](#).

