U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Pipeline and
Hazardous Materials Safety
Administration**

400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

DOT GUIDANCE FOR THE SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF MEDICAL OXYGEN FOR PERSONAL USE ON BUSES AND TRAINS

The Department of Transportation recommends that bus and train operators take the following precautions to assure that medical oxygen being transported for passengers' personal use is handled and transported safely:

FOR TRANSPORTATION IN THE PASSENGER COMPARTMENT

- Only transport oxygen in a cylinder maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The manufacturer's instructions and precautions are usually printed on a label attached to the cylinder.

- Before boarding, inspect each cylinder to assure that it is free of cracks or leaks, including the area around the valve and pressure relief device. Listen for leaks; do not load leaking cylinders on the bus or train. Visually inspect the cylinders for dents, gouges or pits. A cylinder that is dented, gouged, or pitted should not be transported.

- Limit the number of cylinders to be transported on board the vehicle to the extent practicable.

- Except in emergency situations, the bus or rail operator should consider limiting the number of passengers requiring medical oxygen.

- Cylinders used for medical oxygen are susceptible to valve damage if dropped. Handle these cylinders with care during loading and unloading operations. Never drag or roll a cylinder. Never carry a cylinder by the valve or regulator.

- Do not handle oxygen cylinders or apparatus with hands or gloves contaminated with oil or grease.

- Secure each cylinder to prevent movement and leakage. "Secured" means the cylinder is not free to move when the vehicle or train is in motion. Each cylinder should be equipped with a valve protection cap.

- Never store or secure oxygen cylinders or other medical support equipment in the aisle. Make sure that the seating of the passenger requiring oxygen does not restrict access to exits or use of the aisle.

- Since the release of oxygen from a cylinder could accelerate a fire, secure each cylinder away from sources of heat or potential sparks.

- Under **no** circumstances should smoking or open flames (cigarette lighter or matches) be permitted in the passenger compartment when medical oxygen is present.

- When you reach your destination, immediately remove all cylinders from the bus or train.

FOR TRANSPORTATION IN THE CARGO COMPARTMENT

- Place each cylinder in a box or crate or load and transport in an upright or horizontal position.

- Valves must be protected against damage, except when in use.

- Secure each cylinder against movement.

- The total weight for oxygen cylinders permitted in a bus cargo compartment is 45 kg (99 lbs). A carrier may elect to transport up to 200 kg (440 lbs) in the cargo compartment if the oxygen cylinders are necessary to protect the health and safety of the passengers. However, we strongly recommend limiting the total weight of the cylinders to 45 kg (99 lbs) except under extraordinary circumstances.

- Oxygen cylinders offered for transportation and transported in rail cars on a passenger train may not exceed 34 lbs (75 kg) gross weight per cylinder.

For further information, contact PHMSA's Hazardous Materials Information Center at 1-(800) 467-4922.

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