

Safe work instrument consultation: periodic test interval for seamless steel cylinders

Proposed safe work instrument to specify a new test interval for seamless steel cylinders.

August/September 2024

Purpose

WorkSafe New Zealand is consulting on a proposed safe work instrument (SWI).

A SWI is secondary legislation that supports or supplements regulations and must be approved by the Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety. The Minister must be satisfied that the appropriate persons and organisations have been consulted before approving the SWI.

This consultation document describes our proposals and seeks your feedback. Your feedback will help WorkSafe decide whether the proposals are appropriate.

[About safe work instruments | WorkSafe](#)

What the proposed SWI would do

WorkSafe proposes to make a SWI that would specify a new test interval for seamless steel cylinders, for the purposes of regulation 15.56(1)(b) of the Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017 (the Regulations).

The Regulations set requirements for cylinders used to transport and store hazardous substances.

Under regulation 15.56, a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) with management and control of a workplace must ensure that no person charges (fills) a cylinder unless it has passed either:

- a. the relevant tests in regulation 15.56(2); or
- b. the inspections and tests in regulation 15.3(1)(b).

The cylinder must undergo and pass these tests at the intervals specified in Schedule 22 of the Regulations or in a SWI.

The proposed SWI would specify a new test interval of 10 years for seamless steel cylinders manufactured after 1930 that are used to hold the following gases:

- Air (except for a self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA))
- Argon
- Cyclopropane
- Ethylene
- Helium
- Hydrogen
- Krypton
- Neon
- Nitrogen
- Nitrous oxide
- Oxygen
- Xenon
- any mixture of the above gases not containing more than 30% by volume of carbon dioxide and having a dew point below -40°C at 1 atmosphere.

Currently the test interval for cylinders containing the above gases reduces to 5 years after 40 years of the cylinder's life.

The SWI would apply only to seamless steel cylinders manufactured after 1930. Cylinders manufactured after 1930 are designed to 'leak before break', enabling a leak to be discovered before a cylinder ruptures. There is a risk that pre-1930 cylinders may fragment on failure without warning.

Why the proposed SWI is needed

Internationally the accepted test interval for cylinders is 10 years, regardless of the age of a cylinder. It is not age that determines whether a cylinder is likely to fail, but rather external factors such as corrosion or damage which can occur at any time during a cylinder's life.

How to have your say

We would like feedback on whether the proposed test interval is appropriate for seamless steel cylinders containing the gases listed above.

You can find a feedback form and information on providing a submission here: [Consultations | WorkSafe](#)

The deadline for receiving submissions is **5pm on Friday 20 September 2024**.

Your submission may be made public

The Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) allows New Zealand citizens and permanent residents, or anyone in New Zealand, to request official information from the government. This includes copies of submissions.

WorkSafe will let you know if we receive an OIA request for a copy of your submission. The content of your submission may be made available to the public, though you can indicate in the feedback form that you would prefer your personal information to be kept confidential. WorkSafe will manage any personal information you supply in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

Next steps

Once the consultation has closed, we will consider the feedback, and finalise the SWI. We will publish on WorkSafe's website a summary of the submissions we receive and any changes made to the proposed SWI.

We will present the final SWI to the Minister for Workplace Relations and Safety for consideration. If the Minister approves the SWI, we will publish the SWI on WorkSafe's website.

Our contact details

If you have any questions about this consultation, please email regulatory.frameworks@worksafe.govt.nz