BATTERY POWERED DEVICES

Purpose
To provide guidance to contractors and visitors at Three Rivers Manufacturers’ Association (TRMA) plant sites participating in the Three Rivers Safety Center.

Objectives
- Ensure the use of intrinsically safe devices.
- Eliminate the use of devices which might cause interference with TRMA site radio or instrumentation frequencies.
- Provide a uniform standard practice for TRMA plant sites.

Equipment
The following devices and similar equipment are considered under this policy:
- Cell phones, radios, pagers, flashlights, cameras, and cordless tools such as drills, screwdrivers, etc.
- Battery powered test equipment such as ultrasonic instrumentation, lasers, Industrial Hygiene equipment/dosimeters, and environmental surveillance equipment such as battery operated flow meters for sewers.
- All battery powered devices including those which may also transmit or receive data including Palm Pilots® and similar devices, computers, personal monitoring equipment including cardiac monitors/transmitters, department of corrections monitoring devices (ankle bracelets), etc.
- Medical devices such as insulin pumps, pacemakers, etc.

Exceptions: Hearing aids and battery powered watches are not regulated under this policy unless/until such devices are developed which could be a source of ignition or cause radio frequency bandwidth interference.

Policy
- Battery powered devices such as those listed above may be used in regulated areas of TRMA plants without a hot work permit only if they are (1) intrinsically safe and (2) have been, prior to use, verified by the plant’s instrument/electrical specialists to pose no threat of bandwidth interference to the plant’s instrument or radio communications systems. TRMA plants will consider whether the equipment has been UL/FM tested and meets the classification requirements as specified by the National Electric Code.
- All other non-compliant battery powered devices are subject to prior approval and regulations/standards as specified by the TRMA plant. This may include issuance of a hot work or low energy permit, continuous monitoring of the work area for flammability, use of the device only outside of regulated areas, or other such measures that may be deemed necessary to minimize or eliminate the device as a source of ignition or bandwidth interference.

Note: Some TRMA plants may require that cell phones, radios or pagers be turned off in or near process units and control rooms even if approved for use in
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the plant. Refer to specific rules at the TRMA plant site.

• Approved communications devices may be used in vehicles outside restricted areas only if the vehicle is parked or in a moving vehicle if the equipment is designed for hands-free operation.

• Contractor and visitor companies should conduct awareness-level training regarding battery powered devices for their employees upon hiring and at least annually thereafter.