

You Can Avoid Garage Disasters

According to the Insurance Institute of America, common mishaps that lead to serious injuries and major damage to garage facilities are caused when:

- Vehicles shift or fall off improperly set jacks, trapping and crushing people beneath them.
- People suffer burns by touching hot engine parts or other metal components of a vehicle that is being serviced.
- Tires explode or wheel parts fly off when tires are being changed or inflated improperly.
- People are struck by carelessly handled pneumatic tools used to inflate tires.
- Flammable solvents, oils, or rubber cement are ignited during cleaning or patching activities.
- People are struck by high-pressure water or steam during careless vehicle washing or horseplay.
- Major fires and explosions are fueled in the presence of open flame or electrical sparks, especially from burning cigarettes and accumulated charges of static electricity.

You can take these steps to prevent disasters from occurring at your garage:

- Keep customers out of the garage area by frequently updating them on the status of their cars as they wait in a designated area. Also post “No Entry” signs at the garage entrance.
- Confirm vehicles are properly aligned before raising them on a lift.
- Reduce fire hazards by immediately throwing oily paper towels and shop rags into a dedicated container. Never smoke around or discard cigarette butts in containers used for flammable rag disposal. Provide fireproof ashtrays and empty them daily.
- Make sure all fire extinguishers are properly inspected and all employees know how to use them.

If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.