Safety Short: Use and Storage of Compressed Gas Cylinders at UAB.

Use and Storage of Compressed Gas Cylinders
Compressed gas cylinders of all shapes and sizes are used all over campus for everything from welding to research. There are two types of hazards associated with the use, storage and handling of compressed gas cylinders:

1. The chemical hazard associated with the cylinder contents (corrosive, toxic, flammable, etc.) and,

2. The physical hazards represented by the presence of a high pressure vessel in the laboratory.

Some cylinders can be pressurized up to 2,200 pounds per square inch (psi). If the cylinder is improperly secured and falls so that the valve is damaged, it can release all that pressure very suddenly through a hole no bigger than a pencil. This creates a very dangerous and destructive missile.

The Department of Occupational Health and Safety revised the policy on the use and storage of compressed gas cylinders effective on February 7, 2007. The policy prohibits everyone, vendors, UAB Shipping & Receiving, UAB faculty and staff, from leaving cylinders unsecured on UAB property at any time. Cylinders must be secured with a proper securing device. This can be a wall fixture with a chain or strap, or a bench-top clamp with a chain or strap. The strap or chain should be secured on the upper 1/3 of the cylinder. Upon request, Shipping and Receiving can have a bench-top device available at the time a tank is delivered, however, the cost of the device is the responsibility of the laboratory or department ordering the compressed gas.

If you order pickup or delivery of compressed gas cylinders, please be courteous.

• Make arrangements for someone to be present to receive the delivery.
• Empty cylinder(s) for pickup should already be disconnected, be secured and have the valve protection cap in place before the delivery personnel arrive.
• Vendors have been instructed not to leave any cylinders unsecure, not to connect or disconnect cylinders, and not to transport cylinders without valve protection caps.
• Cylinders left unsecured and unattended, or without caps will not be exchanged.