

Important Changes to Medical Oxygen Cylinders

Currently there are two important changes occurring in the medical gases industry. The changes are:

1. Changing the cylinder valve connection on larger medical oxygen cylinders

Australian Standards AS2373.3 determines which valve outlets must be used for medical gas cylinders was amended in 2007. Consequently gas suppliers are required to change the medical oxygen valve outlets on the larger size cylinders. Larger cylinders, (size D, E & G), that currently have the threaded Type 10 bullnose connection will be changed to the pin indexed yoke type connection (same as the smaller medical oxygen cylinders).

The reason for this change is to enhance the safety for end users of medical oxygen by eliminating the risk of connection to incorrect gas cylinders for medical oxygen applications. Currently the threaded Type 10 bullnose is shared between medical oxygen, industrial oxygen, argon, helium and can also be used as a general connection for non-flammable, non-corrosive gas mixtures. With this change, medical oxygen will have its own dedicated gas specific connections.

This change will require end users to undertake some modification, upgrading or replacement of existing equipment.



Old Type 10 Valve



New Pin Indexed Valve

2. Changing the colour of medical gas cylinders

Australian Standard AS4484 defines the labelling and colour coding for gas cylinders was amended in 2004. This amendment requires that medical gas cylinders shall have a white body colour with the colour on the shoulder of the cylinder indicating the type of gas in the cylinder.

The reason for this change is to enhance the safety of end users of medical gases by clearly identifying medical gas cylinders from industrial gas cylinders. Currently medical and industrial gas cylinders share very similar colour coding.

For this change the only thing users need to do is to be familiarised with the new colour coding system. Gas suppliers should be able to assist in this by supplying appropriate information.

These changes are being coordinated by ANZIGA (Australian and New Zealand industrial Gas Association). The changes will be occurring on a state by state basis according to the following schedule.

Northern Territory	September 2009
South Australia	February 2010
Western Australia	May 2010
Queensland	August 2010
New South Wales	February 2011
Victoria	June 2011
Tasmania	June 2011

Contact your medical gas supplier for further information on the exact timing of the changes.