



## Fuel tank explosion sends local man to hospital

A local man using an arc welder on an old fuel tank was sent to the hospital with severe burns after the tank he was working on exploded.

According to police reports, the explosion occurred around noon on Saturday at a salvage yard on the 58300 block of Eleven Mile Road. Oakland County Sheriff's Office deputies from the Lyon Township substation and Lyon Township firefighters arrived on the scene after a neighbor called to report the explosion.

Firefighters arrived and put out a small fire.

According to Lyon Township Fire Chief Ron McClain, the business, which police said is the Watkins Salvage Yard, is located in a residential area. He said the victim, a 36-year-old Wolverine Lake man, was working by a pull barn on the site. The explosion caused some tires located next to the pull barn to catch fire, which released some dark, black smoke into the air that could be seen by passers by. McClain said there was no damage to the pull barn, and firefighters were able to put the fire out quickly.

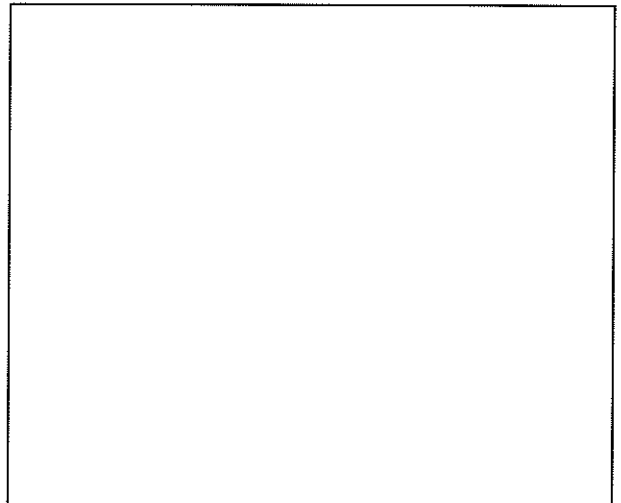
By the time firefighters arrived on the scene, however, family members had already taken the man to Providence Park


Hospital in Novi. From there he was air lifted to Ann Arbor, to the University of Michigan Hospital Burn Center where he was listed in critical condition. According to police reports the man suffered third degree burns, which McClain said are the worst burns. McClain had no update on the man as of Tuesday.

The fire chief said this should be a lesson for anyone who is thinking about using a welder on a fuel tank, which he said is very dangerous.

"Even if the tank is empty, it could still contain fumes, which in fact are even more dangerous than liquid. Leave it to a professional," said McClain.

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