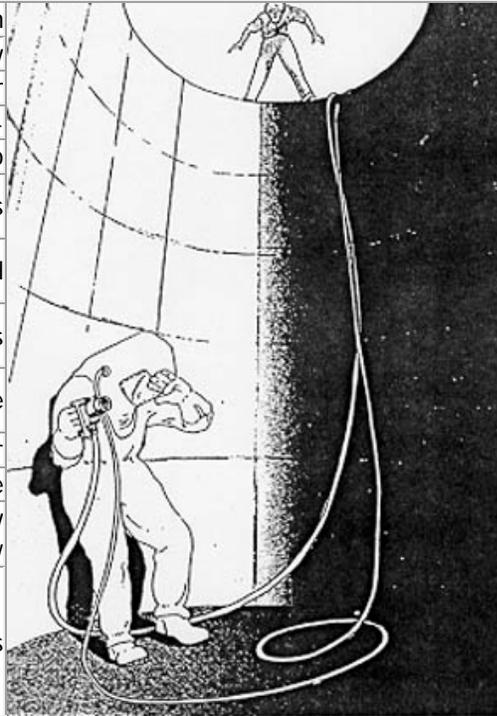


ACCIDENT SUMMARY No. 36

Accident Type:	Asphyxiation
Weather Conditions:	Warm, partly cloudy
Type of Operation:	Sandblasting/painting contractor
Size of Work Crew:	4
Collective Bargaining	No
Competent Safety Monitor on Site:	Yes
Safety and Health Program in Effect:	Limited
Was the Worksite Inspected Regularly:	Yes
Training and Education Provided:	Inadequate
Employee Job Title:	Sandblaster/Painter
Age & Sex:	56-Male
Experience at this Type of Work:	5 years on a permanently assigned crew
Time on Project:	45 minutes



BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

A contract employee was assigned to sandblast the inside of a reactor vessel during turnaround activities at a petrochemical refinery. Instead of relying on the contract company's own air compressors in accordance with the contractor's policy, the contract foreman connected the employee's supplied air respirator to a hose containing what he thought was plant air. Instead it was nitrogen. Both hoses were identical except for markings at the shutoff valve. The sandblaster entered the vessel, descended to the bottom, placed the respirator hood on his head and was overcome.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Employers must instruct employees to recognize and avoid unsafe conditions associated with their work (29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2)).
2. Contractors should follow a policy of using only their own air compressors or breathing air cylinders for their employees.
3. Middle and/or upper management personnel should routinely check first line supervisors to insure they are following established company safety policies.

SOURCES OF HELP

- Safety and Health Requirements for Working in Confined Space, a slide-tape training program including instructor's guide and class handouts, helps employees recognize potential sources of danger in confined spaces and explains how to select and use proper protective clothing and equipment. Available from the National Audio Visual Center, order No. A12793, for \$90, prepaid, 8700 Edgeworth Dr., Capitol Heights, MD 20743-3701, telephone (301) 763-1896.
- Construction Safety and Health Standards (OSHA 2207) which contains all OSHA job safety and health rules and regulations (1926 and 1910) covering construction.
- OSHA-funded free consultation services. Consult your telephone directory for the number of your local OSHA area or regional office for further assistance and advice (Listed under U.S. Labor Department or under the state government section where states administer their own OSHA programs).

NOTE: The case here described was selected as being representative of fatalities caused by improper work practices. No special emphasis or priority is implied nor is the case necessarily a recent occurrence. The legal aspects of the incident have been resolved, and the case is now closed.