

# TOOLBOX SAFETY TRAINING

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Vol 17 - No 30 DISTRACTIONS AND CONFINED SPACES

Bill and David were assigned to work in a confined space vessel. As they were accustomed to normally do, they checked their gear and equipment, and followed all procedures as they were taught in their safety training meetings (or did they?). On this particular day, Bill and David picked up their work order and proceeded to test their confined

work space to make sure it was safe. They tested the high, medium and low areas of the vessel. The high and medium area readings were normal, but when they tested the low area of the vessel it did not give them a reading and they falsely assumed the work area was safe to work in.

David put his harness and lifeline on and climbed in the vessel while Bill was the lookout person. David was working on cleaning the vessel when he finally reached the low area. Suddenly Bill became distracted with the traffic and the noise around him and for just a few seconds forgot to lookout for David. Moments later Bill called out to David but there was no answer. He called out again and still no answer. In a panic, Bill climbed down just a few feet and saw David somewhat disoriented. Bill reached in and grabbed David and pulled him out. Very confused, David asked what happened. After a few minutes David was okay. He had been overwhelmed with nitrogen.

What went wrong? What did Bill and David forget to do? Bill and David should have known to take the following confined space safety steps:

1. Always test the air inside for oxygen, flammability and toxicity before and while working in a confined space. Use only instruments or meters designed for this type of work.
2. Set up a lifeline or harness for emergency rescues with a full-time attendant.
3. Attendant and workers need to stay in constant communication.
4. Confined space entry training must be in place.

**1910.146 Confined spaces are dangerous, but if you understand the risks and follow the safety precautions, confined spaces don't have to be deadly.**



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