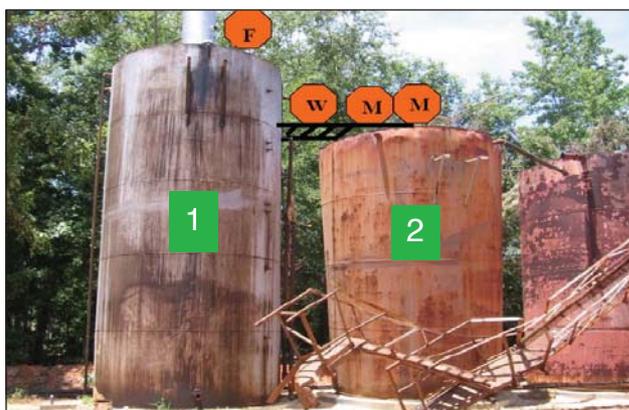


Hot Work Permits



What happened?

On the left, a foreman (F), a welder (W), and two maintenance workers (M) were welding on Tank 1. Proper hot work procedures were not followed. There was no check of the atmosphere for flammable vapors using a flammable gas detector. Instead, Tank 1 was checked for flammable vapors by inserting a lit welding torch into the tank — an unsafe practice in itself. The tanks were interconnected, but not properly isolated, and some contained flammable vapors, which vented into the welding area and ignited. The foreman and the two maintenance workers were killed, and the welder was seriously injured. Also note the makeshift “work platform” — a ladder placed between the Tanks 1 and 2, on which people were working.

On the right, welding was being done near a gasoline truck, again without following proper hot work permit procedures. Flammable vapors ignited causing a fire and explosion. One end of the truck was found against a building on the other side of the street! One person was killed and another was seriously injured.

What you can do

- Recognize hazardous hot work activities — welding, cutting, grinding, operation of gas or diesel engines, or any other spark producing activity, which could ignite flammable vapors.
- Understand and follow your facility’s hot work permit procedures.
- Ensure that hot work permits are issued by properly trained and qualified personnel.
- If you have any doubt about the safety of a hot work activity (or any other work activity!), stop the work immediately and bring your concerns to the attention of management.
- Use a flammable gas detector designed to safely identify a flammable atmosphere.

Recognize confined spaces and treat them with respect!

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