

SCP Tribune[®]

Ventilation Changes Serious Incident into a Near-Miss

“Proper ventilation **shall be provided** whenever workers are welding, cutting or heating in a **confined space.**”
(Sub Part D: §1915.51)

July’s SCP Tribune noted that cutting torches are heavily regulated by the OSHA Ship Repair Standard’s Subpart D (Cutting, Heating) and Subpart P (Fire Protection). The rules are serious and specific because cutting torches are especially dangerous, particularly in confined spaces.

A little local history illustrates: In 1979, a towboat lost a shaft and was run over by the barge it was towing. (For those with long memories, that was the M/V FRANCIS W, towing a barge near Lofall, at the location of the Hood Canal Bridge.) The FRANCIS W was a total loss and languished pier-side in Lake Union until a fisherman decided to cut off the superstructure and modify the towboat hull for use as a longliner.

One modification was to cut the hawsepipe out of the chain



locker. To accomplish this the fisherman hired, out of the want-ads, an inexperienced worker with no craft training. At coffee break the young worker dropped the torch into the sump of the chain locker. After break the worker pulled up his lead and lit the torch without incident. But when sparks and slag fell into the sump, leaked acetylene exploded and burnt the young man severely.

At trial the owner pleaded innocence, noting the money he had spent on tank cleaners and that he had even got a Chemist’s Certificate. It made no difference. A jury awarded the injured young man \$1,200,000 because the owner had willfully failed to do an employer’s most basic duty: To force-ventilate any confined space during hot work.

Compare that outcome to what happened recently: A worker left his lead and torch unattended in a towboat’s tank. (OSHA violation!) (Continued on the next page.)

TRAINING

Shipyards Competent Person

3-Day Initial
August 13-15
September 10-12

1-Day Updates
August 10
August 22
September 11
September 24



OSHA 10 Maritime

This 10-hour training on 29 CFR 1915 provides methods on recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in workplaces specific to the maritime industry. Please call our office (206.932.0206) for the next class date.

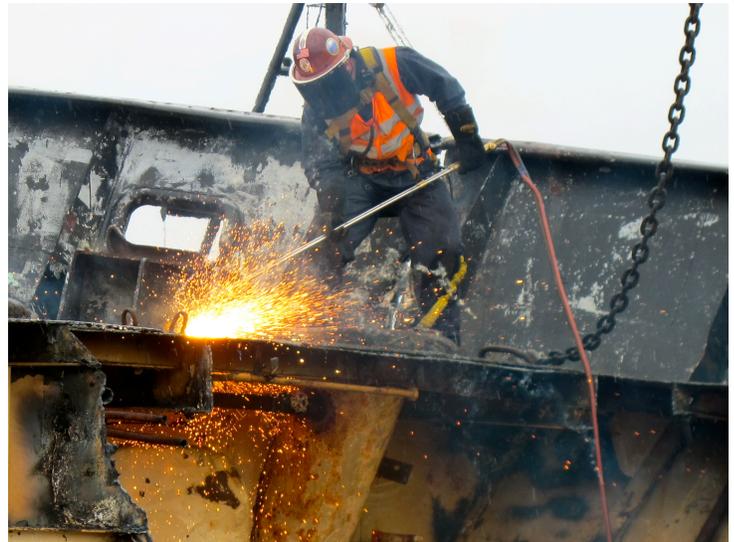
Ventilation, continued

During his break, the torch leaked. The fitter and his fire watch each testified that, when hot work started again, they saw a flare-up of cutting gas. However, because the shipyard had done its OSHA duty and had rigged up a blower in the space, the “explosion” was limited to a flash in the ductwork. No damage. No injury.

The lesson? The smart shipyard’s use of ventilation changed a serious-injury/damage/disaster situation into a cheap, educational, near-miss. Just imagine how, 30 years ago, some ventilation would have saved that owner \$1,200,000 and would have saved the worker his pain and disability!

Editorial: Ship Breaking Permit Open for Comment

Dealing with abandoned and derelict vessels (technically: SHIPBREAKING) is very dangerous work. The OSHA standard for “Maritime Employment” (29 CFR 1915) regulates it accordingly. The problem is: safety is expensive. Leaded and anti-fouling paints, waste solvent, combustible tank sludges and asbestos all wait below the waterline. Safe shipbreaking means tank cleaning, respiratory protection, ventilation, testing and fall protection; each is both essential and costly. However, a new focus of the State Department of Ecology aims to make permits for demolishing derelict craft more widely-available and, above all, cheaper.



Shipbreakers use long torch handles because the work is so dangerous

So, it is not surprising that in their permit process DOE does not even mention the dangers workers face in Shipbreaking. We shipyard people have one last chance to voice our concerns. A public workshop and hearing will be held on August 19th at South Seattle Community College’s Duwamish Campus, Room C122. DOE will answer questions after the workshop and take written comment until August 22nd.

You can find the draft permit and fact sheet online at:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/vesseldeconstruction/index.html>.

Submit comments by e-mail to: vincent.mcgowan@ecy.wa.gov. -Thanks for Consideration. Don

Mark Your Calendar for a Party!

Please join us for our annual Customer Appreciation Party on Friday September 19th from 3-6pm at Sound Testing’s office, 2992 SW Avalon Way, Seattle, WA 98126. This is our opportunity to thank all of you for your continued support. We’ll provide food and beverages. There will be door prizes and raffle prizes. The raffle grand prize is an Apple iPad mini! Sound Testing Chemists will be giving out raffle tickets on the job site. Simply collect the tickets throughout the month and bring them to the party. The grand prize will be drawn at 5:30PM. RSVP to: Peggy 206-932-0206 or email admin@soundtestinginc.com

Ask a Chemist

Question:

How does “Dead Weight Tonnage” relate to the actual weight of a vessel’s steel?



Answer:

Dead Weight Tonnage (DWT) tells not how much a vessel weighs, but how much weight it can safely carry.

DWT = Tons of cargo, fuel, fresh and ballast water, supplies and people. The DWT is given in “Metric Tons,” equivalent to the old “English Long Tons” (2,200 lbs/ton).

The actual weight of a vessel’s steel is usually given as the weight of the water the vessel’s empty hull displaces as it floats. This is the vessel’s **DISPLACEMENT** and is also expressed in Metric Tons.

Congratulations!

On July 24th the National Fire Protection Association, through their Marine Chemist Qualification Board, certified our own Joseph Trettevik as Marine Chemist No. 725! This honor, awarded to only 624 other applicants over the past 92 years, brings joy and pride to us at Sound Testing, and especially to our other Trettevik: Joseph’s dad Craig, Marine Chemist No. 688.



Congratulations Joseph!



Congrats to **Rick Chalker** from **Foss Maritime** for winning last month’s quiz and a \$25 gift card!

Last Month’s Quiz:

Q: When maintaining safe conditions, what does OSHA 1915 say you must do to pipelines to prevent hazardous materials from entering a space?

A: Pipelines should be disconnected, blanked off or blocked by a positive method to prevent materials from being discharged into the space.

This Month’s Question:

What’s the difference between a winch and a windlass?

Submit your answers to newsletter@soundtestinginc.com before August 25, 2014. All correct answers will be entered into a random drawing and one person will win a \$25 gift card!

One entry per person, please.