



# SCP Tribune<sup>®</sup>

## GIVE US A BRAKE!

If boats and barges have no brakes, why does our industry use cans and cans of brake cleaner? Why? Because brake cleaner is a cheap and easy way to get some fairly effective solvent.

But, like all chemicals used in ship repair, solvents can be a problem. Actually, 2 problems. First, all solvents (except water...) are toxic when they vaporize. Since we humans have evolved without breathing brake cleaner, we have developed no natural defenses. We're easy targets for toxicity.



Note Can Warning Label

And second: Gassy solvents can explode with enthusiasm.

Two stories illustrate these concerns:

No.1: A fishboat skipper ordered two young crewmembers to muck out his day tank.

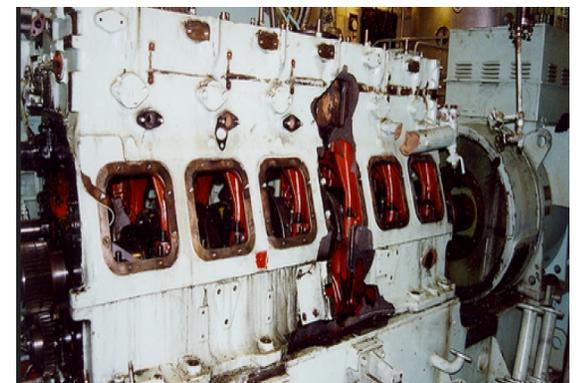
To cut the oily sludge he gave them some cans of...brake cleaner.

**WARNING: Contains Tetrachloroethylene**

Which dissolved the diesel sludge and, no doubt, workers' kidney and liver tissue as well.

Story 2: Just this Spring 2 mechanics looking for an internal crack sprayed the crankcase of a 12-cylinder marine diesel with.... brake cleaner. A violent flash put both workers in the hospital with 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns and lung damage.

Solvents are everywhere and their uses routine. So workers may not realize how seriously OSHA treats solvent cleaning: Subpart B's section on "Cleaning" begins: "**1915.13(b)(2)** " **Testing shall be conducted by a competent person...**" With no SCP to test vapor and supervise ventilation, using solvents is dangerous.



## TRAINING

### Shipyard Competent Person

#### Full 3-Day Courses

Oct 4-6 @ SSC\*

Nov 1-3 @ SSC\*

Dec 6-8 @ SSC\*

\*South Seattle College  
Georgetown Campus



#### 1-Day Update Courses

Oct 5 @ SSC\*

Oct 11 @ Fremont Maritime

Nov 2 @ SSC\*

Nov 8 @ Fremont Maritime

Dec 7 @ SSC\*

Dec 13 @ Fremont Maritime



#### DIRECTIONS:

Fremont Maritime is at Fishermen's Terminal  
SSC: Georgetown Campus very close to I-5, Michigan  
St Exit, straight to Corson Ave S

### OSHA 10 Maritime September 21-22<sup>nd</sup>

10-hour training on 29 CFR 1915 provides methods on recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of safety and health hazards in workplaces specific to maritime.

Any Questions? Call 206-932-0206

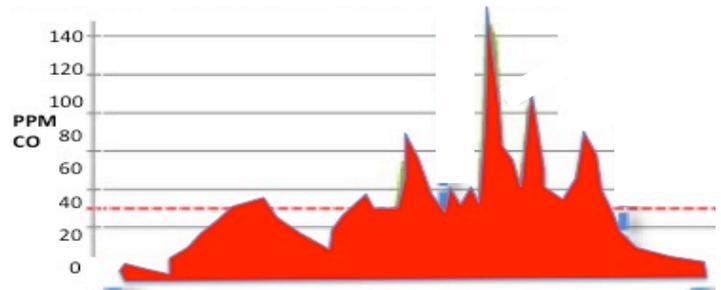
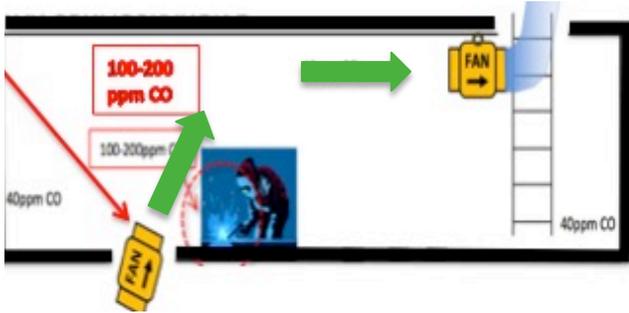
CURIOSITY & KNOWLEDGE KEEP WORKERS SAFE

Carbon Arc cutting (“scarfing”) has always been troublesome because it generates so much poisonous Carbon Monoxide. How to deal with CO from this violent process? Fairhaven Shipyard Quality Assurance/Competent Person/All-Around Technical Person Jay Mueller did a very neat study of the CO problem. Here’s what he found:

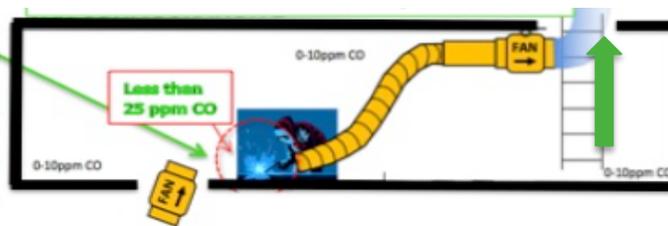
“One morning, while tinkering with a Gas Alert Micro 5, I noticed the SD card inside and became curious about the sort of information it stores. As it turns out, the SD card contains (Excel format) in 5-second intervals, all of the levels for CO dating back years. This inspired me to see if I could use the Gas Alert Micro 5 for something besides just gas freeing spaces.”

A worker was full-time arc-gouging in a ferry’s cramped steering gear room. The ventilation (note green arrows) seemed good.

So, “I set the Micro 5 behind the worker and left the space for awhile.” At lunchtime, Mueller graphed the meter’s SD card data (note red image below...) Jay was surprised the ventilation left the worker exposed to so much CO (spikes above 150ppm!)



So during lunchtime Jay modified the ventilation: (Note the bottom left image...) He merely added 10 feet of reinforced 8” duct to the suction blower at the top of the space.



“The result was surprising, as CO levels dropped extremely low at the site of carbon arc, and were virtually zero throughout the rest of the space. What an unbelievable difference!”

At the next safety meeting Mueller got everyone’s attention when he explained his findings to welders and pipefitters. They saw his graphs (red and green) and immediately used his instructions to set up capture ventilation at their work sites.

“A week or so later I received comments from workers about how they have fewer headaches, less fatigue, and didn’t taste metal at the end of the day.”

Not only did Jay Mueller have the curiosity to investigate his workers’ job safety, he also used his new information to make the workplace a lot safer! Well done Jay and Fairhaven Shipyard!

## NOT ALL FUEL IS AFLOAT

Most often those oil tanks Competent People deal with are on vessels afloat. But not always.

In the words of the Maritime Standard, sometimes a shipyard may store forklift diesel, paint solvents or tank-cleaning waste or heating fuel in "landside" tanks. Whether on lifting frames or buried underground, such "landside" tanks deserve respect.

Recently a crew uncovered an old buried heating oil tank. As they cut off its vent connection with a grinder, the tank exploded. (Fortunately, the tank's ends, weaker than the cylindrical body, blew out first. So two workers standing on the tank suffered only ringing ears and, reportedly, "superficial damage to underwear...")

This happening shows why the Seattle Fire Department demands a Marine Chemist's Certificate for hot work on any such fuel tank in a commercial site, whether shipyard or not.



Congrats to **Rick Chalker** of **Foss** August's Winner:  
Honorable Mention: Crowley's Michael Santini

**Q:** What does the Mate call that central valve which controls cargo flow among various cargo systems? **MIXMASTER**

### September's Question:

What is this pictured to the Left?

Please send your answer to:  
[newsletter@soundtestinginc.com](mailto:newsletter@soundtestinginc.com) or  
[admin@soundtestinginc.com](mailto:admin@soundtestinginc.com)  
before September 25<sup>th</sup>.

Each correct answer will be entered into a random drawing and one person will win a **\$50** gift card! One entry per person, please.