



# SCP Tribune<sup>®</sup>

## THE WORLD OF CERTAINTY

Out came the flushing tips as workers prepared to remove D-rings and padeyes from a deck-cargo barge just into the yard. Of course, the Competent Person inspected the barge: was it “SAFE FOR HOT WORK?”

Then, some heartburn. The Project Manager dug his heels in. He didn't want to order the steel shop to delay the job by taking off 20 manways for internal survey. (After all, the estimating department assumes \$85 to take off and replace each manhole cover. And that kind of money wasn't in the bid.) Besides, the manhole covers had threaded 3-inch plugs; why couldn't the Competent Person get enough information tests through those accesses?



At this point, the SCP recalled what it means to write a barge “SAFE FOR HOT WORK.” Essentially, 4 considerations: 1. Oxygen in the space is under control: 21%. (Fine: Test through the threaded access.). 2. The space is free of combustible gas (LEL reading near 0%). OK: Test through the threaded access. 3. Space is free of anything that might catch fire during the hot work. Oh-oh. How, squinting through a 3” threaded hole, could anyone know that? (Continued)

## TRAINING

### Shipyard Competent Person

#### Full 3-Day Courses

Feb 7-9 @ SSC\*

Mar 7-9 @ SSC\*

Apr 4-6 @ SSC\*

\*South Seattle College  
Georgetown Campus



#### 1-Day Update Courses

Feb 8 @ SSC\*

Feb 15 @ Fishermen's  
Terminal

Feb 20 @ Bremerton

Mar 5 @ Tacoma

Mar 8 @ SSC\*

Mar 15 @ Fishermen's  
Terminal

Apr 5 @ SSC\*



### DIRECTIONS:

#### Fishermen's Terminal:

Nordby Conference Room

#### SSC:

Georgetown Campus very close to  
I-5, Michigan St Exit, straight to  
Corson Ave S

### OSHA 10 Maritime

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.

Any Questions? Call 206-932-0206

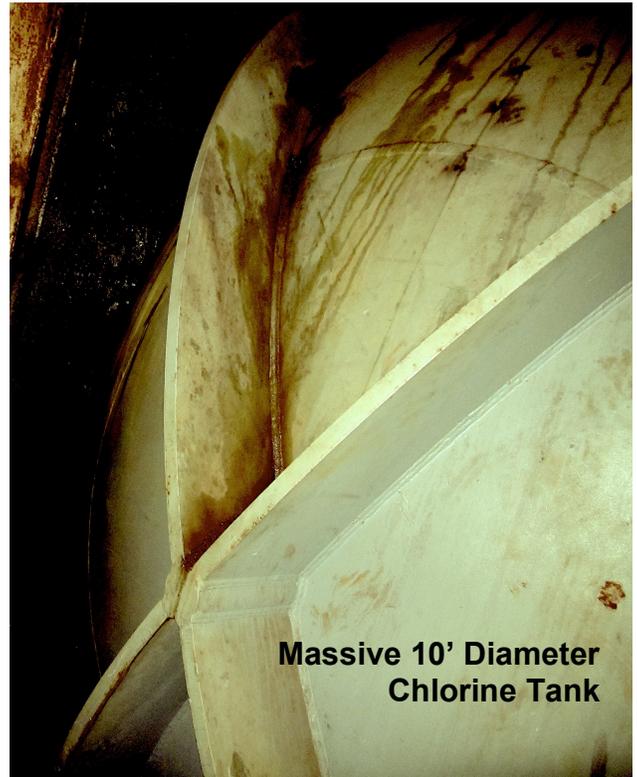
## WORLD OF CERTAINTY, CONT.

Answer; You can't. Might be foam on the overhead, might be thick paint below, might contain dunnage, might be....?? And lastly, 4: Adjacent spaces must be clean enough so they won't feed a fire; must not have gassy air; and should be far from the repairs. How could anyone squinting through the threaded opening be certain about those nearby spaces?

So, the Competent Person stood his ground. He really needed those manways removed so he could "...deal in the world of certainty..." as his training had instructed him.

Good thing. As he got belowdecks in a center void the SCP was shocked to see the bulk of a free-standing 40,000-gallon registered pressure vessel! In another life that barge had serviced paper mills on the Columbia River, and the pressure vessel had carried liquid chlorine.

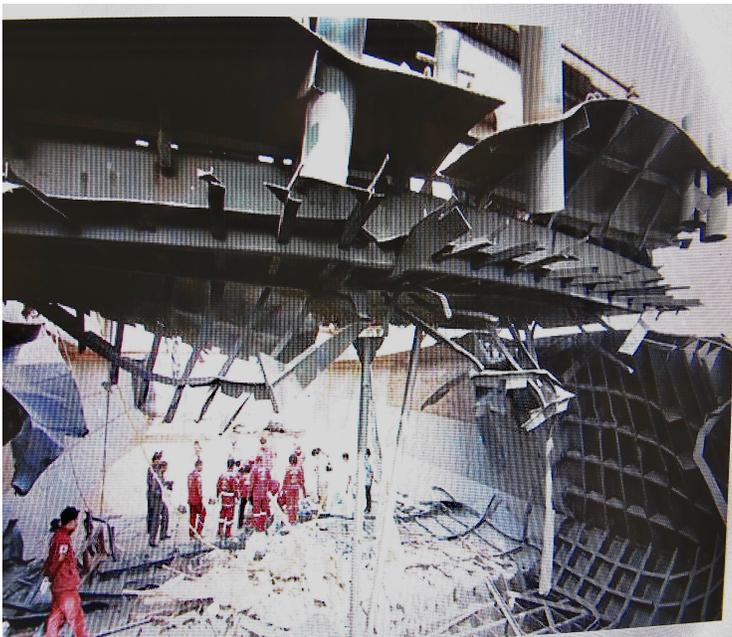
Turned out the chlorine was long gone. But without bodily being in the void the SCP wouldn't have even known of the hazard. And who wants to be ignorant of such basic worries as a job starts?



**Massive 10' Diameter  
Chlorine Tank**

## NO FUEL, NO SCP?

Your SCP Tribune focuses mostly on Ship Repair because most of us work in that craft.



However, OSHA's Maritime Standard covers not only repair, but also Shipbuilding. Plus **Shipbreaking** (vessel demolition).

One might think there's no need for Competent People as vessels are being built as long as they have no fuel aboard. But this photo of overseas workers standing by in the wreckage of a new car-ferry shows why even new construction needs your services. Poorly ventilated paint solvent vapor had exploded catastrophically. Which is why Subpart C demands that a Shipyard Competent Person test the ventilation in a spray paint operation. (That also reminds us not to use a gassy solvent when we thin paint.)

## GASSY STUFFING TUBE

This wisdom from friend David Miller, Marine Chemist in South Carolina:

The Military Sealift Command has some elderly tank vessels. They were built with a security feature no longer in routine use:

Years ago explosive mines used magnetic fields to target ships. So a heavy cable, installed inside the entire hull, would bleed off the magnetic field a vessel tends to absorb when traveling through salt water. This cable was run through bulkhead stuffing tubes around the vessel sideshell. Nowadays this cable is being removed and the stuffing tubes cut and blanked at the tank bulkheads.

Writes David, "We have found these tubes to be extremely flammable in the past and it was a challenge to open them, blow them out and secure them."

One January night, early in 3<sup>rd</sup> shift, pipefitters were "cold-cutting" the cable and the sealed stuffing tube with a "Sawzall" when it exploded "with a fireball about 8' in diameter." A Chemist's immediate investigation pointed towards a hydrogen explosion.



Lessons?

1. Another "hollow metal structure" adventure.
2. The zinc in the galvanized pipe is suspected of making the explosive hydrogen.
3. We tend to assume mechanical cutting with a Sawzall blade amounts to "cold work." But any reasonably enthusiastic worker can generate sparks from a hand-held hacksaw. And even if the hacksaw spark is not incendiary, the armature sparks are. Use of "sparking" motors and blades is always considered "hot work" in tank ship and refinery work.
4. A stream of air might have prevented the explosion.
5. No one got hurt. And everyone got smarter.

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Congratulations to **Greg Stewart** of **Manson Construction**, January's Winner  
Honorable Mentions; Too numerous to mention!

**Q:** What's the regulatory term for demolishing a vessel?

**A:** **SHIPBREAKING**

**February's Question:**

Both hydrogen sulfide and carbon monoxide are "acid gases". And there are chemical cartridge respirators to protect against "acid gases." But while some smart chemist could easily design a chemical cartridge to trap carbon monoxide, you will never see one in the ship repair workplace. Why?

Please send us your answer to [newsletter@soundtestinginc.com](mailto:newsletter@soundtestinginc.com) or [admin@soundtestinginc.com](mailto:admin@soundtestinginc.com) before February 25, 2018.

Every correct answer will be entered into a random drawing and one person will win a **\$50** gift card!

One entry per person, please.