Farmer Asphyxiated In CO2 Atmosphere



Lack of oxygen killed a farmer who fell into a silo.

He was preparing for the arrival of corn to be placed in the top of the silo. He climbed into the top of the silo, fell into the carbon dioxide atmosphere and never moved. It took several firefighters and ambulance attendants about two hours to remove his body at considerable risk to themselves because the narrow entrance was difficult to negotiate with their air tanks.

Although this incident happened on a farm, it is strikingly similar to a kind of incident which occurs in many other industries. Never enter a confined space with a potentially hazardous atmosphere unless you are correctly equipped and trained to do so. You need a supplied air respirator to breathe and a safety lifeline so you can be rescued. Never do this alone. You must have permission to enter the space, and rescuers must be standing by to monitor your situation and pull you out if necessary. Many rescuers die in situations such as this. Silos should have posted warnings about the dangers of carbon dioxide. Silos should be designed so work can be done without entering the hazardous atmosphere and so rescue can be effected.