Training Wasn’t Passed On



A construction foreman died and a laborer was critically injured after they were exposed to toxic gases while working in a sewage pumping station dry well.

Three workers were trying to remove a blank that had been placed in a pipe to block sewage flow, when toxic gases and liquids trapped inside it were released. The foreman died the next day in hospital.

Four company supervisors reported having attended a five-hour confined space seminar earlier, but reportedly they did not believe that the training directly pertained to their work. The company owner said the supervisors had been instructed to provide confined space training to their workers, but it never happened.

They had been instructed only to leave their work area if their air monitor alarm sounded.

Investigators made three recommendations regarding this tragic incident:

- Employers should develop and implement comprehensive confined space entry programs.
- Employers and employees should conduct daily job hazard analyses of all work areas.
- Contracting authorities should require companies submitting bids to specify how they will implement a safety and health program.