



Shipyard Competent Person

Applicable OSHA Compliance Information:

- CFR 29 - 1915.7
- CFR 29 - 1915.12(a)(1)
- CFR 29 - 1915.12(b)(1)
- CFR 29 - 1915.12(c)(1)
- CFR 29 - 1914(b)
- CFR 29 - 1915.15(c)
- CFR 29 - 1915.53(b)
- CFR 29 - 1915.53(e)(1)
- CFR 29 - 1915.53(f)
- CFR 29 - 1915.54(c)
- CFR 29 - 1915.7(c)
- CFR 29 - 1915.16
- CFR 29 - 1915.7(b)(2)(i)

As most shipyard employees know, working in confined spaces can be extremely dangerous if the proper precautions are not followed. Failure to conduct the proper atmospheric tests can lead to catastrophic situations such as explosions, flash fires, asphyxiations due to lack of oxygen or a toxic substance that may be present in the confined space.

It is also extremely important to ensure the person who is conducting the required tests has the necessary training and experience to conduct the atmospheric tests in the proper order and method to detect any problems that may exist.

The following information will help guide shipyard competent persons who are responsible for testing confined spaces before workers enter.

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Safety / Compliance Tips

- Shipyard employers must designate competent persons who possess the following minimum criteria: [\[1915.7\(c\)\]](#)
 - Ability to carry out instructions and perform tests as directed by the Certified Marine Chemist.
 - Understanding of appropriate [1915](#) standards.
 - Knowledge about the structure, location, and spaces in which work is performed.
 - Ability to perform tests, calibrate and use test equipment, interpret test results, and maintain test records.
 - Ability to inspect, test, evaluate spaces, and determine the need for further evaluation by a Certified Industrial Hygienist or Certified Marine Chemist
- Visually inspect the following spaces and test to determine the atmosphere's oxygen content before initial entry into the spaces by an employee. [\[1915.12\(a\)\(1\)\]](#)
 - Spaces that have been sealed
 - Spaces containing or that have previously contained combustible or flammable liquids or gases
 - Spaces containing or that have previously contained liquids, gases, or solids that are toxic, corrosive, or irritating
 - Spaces that have been fumigated
Spaces that contain or that have previously contained materials or residues of materials that create an oxygen-deficient atmosphere
- Visually inspect spaces containing or that have previously contained combustible or flammable liquids or gases before initial entry into the spaces by an employee in order to:
 - Determine the presence of combustible or flammable liquids within these spaces, and
 - Test to determine the concentration of flammable vapors and gases within these spaces prior to entry by an employee. [\[1915.12\(b\)\(1\)\]](#)
- Before initial entry by an employee, visually inspect spaces containing, or that have previously contained liquids, gases or solids that are toxic, corrosive, or irritating to:
 - Determine toxic, corrosive, or irritant residues within these spaces, and
 - Test air concentrations for toxic, corrosive, or irritant materials within these spaces. [\[1915.12\(c\)\(1\)\]](#)
- Test spaces before hot work and ensure that no concentrations of flammable vapors equal to or greater than 10 percent of the LEL exist in the following spaces: [\[1915.14\(b\)\]](#)
 - Dry cargo holds
 - Bilges
 - Engine and boiler room spaces where a Marine Chemist certificate is not required
 - Vessels and vessel sections for which a Marine chemist certificate is not required
 - Land side confined and enclosed spaces or other dangerous atmospheres which a marine chemist certificate is not required

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Safety / Compliance Tips (Cont'd)

- Visually inspect and test each space certified as "Safe for Workers" or "Safe for Hot Work" as often as necessary to ensure that atmospheric conditions within the spaces is maintained within the conditions established by the certificate, after the certificate has been issued. [[1915.15\(c\)](#)]
- Determine the flammability of preservative coatings on any surface before welding, cutting, or heating is performed. [[1915.53\(b\)](#)]
- Test the atmosphere for explosive vapors in spaces in which the metals are coated with soft and greasy preservatives before and immediately after beginning welding, cutting, or heating. [[1915.53\(e\)\(1\)](#) and [1915.53\(f\)](#)].
- Visually inspect structural voids such as skegs, bilge keels, rudders, fair waters, masts, booms, support stanchions, pipe stanchions, and railings, and test them for the presence of flammable liquids or vapors before welding, cutting, heating or brazing. [[1915.54\(c\)](#)]
- Calibrate and maintain test equipment. [[1915.7\(c\)](#)]
- The Shipyard Competent Person (SCP) must complete the [Competent Person Record](#), which must be posted. This record identifies conditions of spaces designated as "Safe for Hot Work" or "Safe for Workers." Spaces that are designated "Not Safe for Workers" or "Not Safe for Hot Work" or "Enter with Restrictions" must have warning signs and labels posted at the entrance of the space. [[1915.16](#)]
The shipyard must maintain and make available a roster of shipyard competent persons. [[1915.7\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#)]

Note: Information posted above was taken from the OSHA Shipbuilding web site



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