


ACCIDENT REPORT FATAL FACTS

ACCIDENT SUMMARY No. 67

Accident Type:	Asphyxiation	
Weather Conditions:	Clear/Cool	
Type of Operation:	Painting/Sand Blasting	
Size of Work Crew:	3	
Competent Safety Monitor on Site:	No	
Safety and Health Program in Effect:	Yes	
Was the Worksite Inspected Regularly:	No	
Training and Education Provided:	No	
Employee Job Title:	Sandblaster	
Age & Sex:	31-Male	
Experience at this Type of Work:	5 Months	
Time on Project:	10 Days	

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

Three employees were sandblasting portions of a heat exchanger in a manufacturing plant, preparing the surface for paint. The job was almost finished except for some touch-up work. The air compressor used to supply breathing air to the sand-blasters' hoods was sent to another job. The workers hooked their supply hoses into the plant's air system without clearing it with the plant's management.

The plant operators, not knowing the plant air was being used for breathing air, shut down the compressor for scheduled maintenance. This caused the nitrogen back-up system to come on line to maintain air pressure.

One sandblaster was asphyxiated from the nitrogen being fed into his hood.

INSPECTION RESULTS

Following an inspection, OSHA issued citations for two serious and two other-than-serious violations of OSHA standards.

ACCIDENT PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that employees are thoroughly trained when required to use respirators in atmospheres immediately dangerous to life, in accordance with 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1926.103(c)(1).
2. Ensure that the compressor used to supply breathing air has a high-temperature or carbon monoxide alarm or both, in accordance with 29 CFR 1926.103(f).
3. WARNING: Nitrogen back-up systems are often used as the back-up system for

compressed air systems. Always determine the type of back-up system before using any air system for breathing purposes.

4. Ensure that frequent and regular inspections of the job site are being done, in accordance with 29 CFR 1926.20(b)(2).
5. Ensure that employees are trained in hazard recognition and avoidance, in accordance with 29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2).

SOURCES OF HELP

- OSHA Construction Standards [29 CFR Part 1926], which include all OSHA job safety and health rules and regulations covering construction, may be purchased from the Government Printing Office, phone (202) 512-1800, fax (202) 512-2250, order number 869022-00114-1, \$33.
- OSHA-funded free consultation services listed in telephone directories under U.S. Labor Department or under the state government section where states administer their own OSHA programs.
- OSHA Safety and Health Training Guidelines for Construction, Volume III (Available from the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161; phone (703) 487-4650; Order No. PB-239-312/AS, \$25) to help construction employers establish a training program.
- Courses in construction safety are offered by the OSHA Training Institute, 1555 Times Drive, Des Plaines, IL 60018, 847/297-4810.
- OSHA regulations, documents and technical information also are available on CD-ROM, which may be purchased from the Government Printing Office, phone (202) 512-1800 or fax (202) 5122250, order number 729-13-00000-5; cost \$79 annually; \$28 quarterly. That information also is on the Internet World Wide Web at <http://www.osha.gov/>

NOTE: The case here described was selected as being representative of fatalities caused by improper work practices. No special emphasis or priority is implied nor is the case necessarily a recent occurrence. The legal aspects of the incident have been resolved, and the case is now closed.