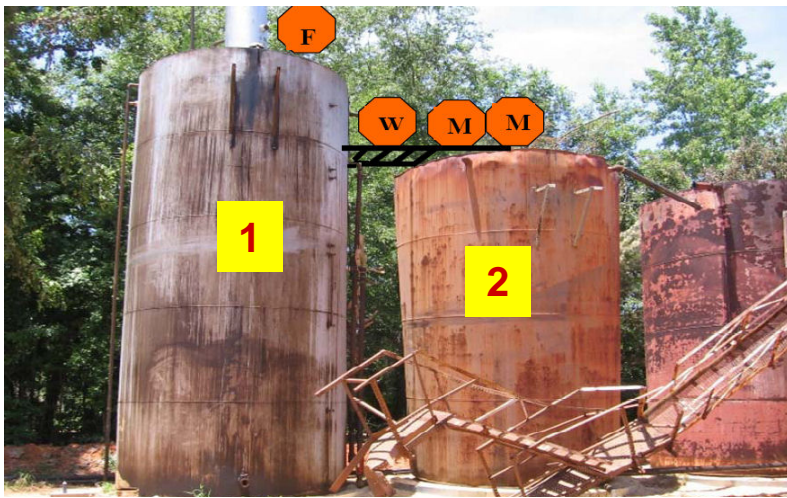


Hot Work Permits

September 2007



What Happened?

On the left, a foreman (F), a welder (W), and 2 maintenance workers (M) were welding on Tank 1. Proper hot work procedures were not followed. There was no check of the atmosphere for flammable vapors using a flammable gas detector. Instead, Tank 1 was checked for flammable vapors by inserting a lit welding torch into the tank – an unsafe practice in itself. The tanks were interconnected, but not properly isolated, and some contained flammable vapors, which vented into the welding area and ignited. The foreman and the 2 maintenance workers were killed, and the welder was seriously injured. Also note the makeshift “work platform” – a ladder placed between the Tanks 1 and 2, on which people were working.

On the right, welding was being done near a gasoline truck, again without following proper hot work permit procedures. Flammable vapors ignited causing a fire and explosion. One end of the truck was found against a building on the other side of the street! One person was killed and another was seriously injured.

What can you do?

- Recognize hazardous hot work activities – welding, cutting, grinding, operation of gas or diesel engines, or any other spark producing activity which could ignite flammable vapors.
- Understand and follow your facility’s hot work permit procedures.
- Ensure that hot work permits are issued by properly trained and qualified personnel.
- If you have any doubt about the safety of a hot work activity (or any other work activity!), stop the work immediately and bring your concerns to the attention of management.
- Use a flammable gas detector designed to safely identify a flammable atmosphere.

Know and follow safe hot work procedures!