



DECEMBER 29 — Airflow Risk Noticed

While welding inside the barge the welding smoke had built up around the workers due to the design of the barge.

We placed fans inside and at the entrance and exit of the barge to pull the smoke out and push fresh air in.

Inside the barge, welding fumes built slowly until vision began to haze. In confined or semi-enclosed spaces, vapors don't disperse naturally. They accumulate and can create toxic, oxygen-depleted, or even explosive environments.

The workers weren't ignoring the hazard; their focus was locked entirely on the weld bead. Single channel focus made the deteriorating environment invisible.

**When smoke grows thick and vision fades,
It's not the time for welding trades.
Vent the space and clear the air—
Your lungs deserve a safer share.**

Welding in a smoky barge is like barbecuing inside a garage — the heat feels normal long after the air stops being safe.

Hazards

- Oxygen displacement
- Respiratory damage
- Flash-fire potential
- Confined-space amplification

Stats

- Confined spaces amplify hazards by 300–500%.
- Welding fumes injure thousands of workers annually.

Words of Wisdom

- Ventilation must be verified, not assumed.
- If you can see the fumes hanging, it's past time to vent.

Pause and Think

Task Fixation happens when the mind locks so tightly onto one task that everything else air quality, visibility, odor, symptoms fade out. This is helpful for precision work, but deadly in confined spaces.

When focus narrows too much, hazards can grow around you without ever entering awareness. The task isn't the problem. It's letting all other senses shut down while doing it.

- Where do YOU experience tunnel vision during work?
- How can we keep ventilation checks active in our awareness?
- What signs mean work must stop immediately?