



February 11 — False Atmosphere Reading

<p>The monitor hose was not inside the confine space while contractors were working inside.</p>	<p>I asked the safety attendant to make sure the monitor hose goes in.</p>
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The air monitor hose was not placed inside the confined space while contractors were working inside, meaning atmospheric conditions were not being measured where the work was actually happening.

**A monitor beeped loud and bright,
But sampled air from the wrong site.
Check the hose where workers stand,
So safety's based on what you scan.**

The monitor was on, but it wasn't measuring the right environment. Air quality outside a confined space can be completely different from the air inside it. When the sampling hose is not positioned correctly, the readings create a false sense of safety. Workers believe the space is safe, while the actual atmosphere remains unknown.

In confined spaces, bad information is more dangerous than no information.

Hazards

- Undetected oxygen deficiency or enrichment
- Exposure to toxic gases or vapors
- Failure to detect flammable atmospheres
- Delayed response to changing conditions
- Increased risk of worker incapacitation

Stats

- Atmospheric hazards are the leading cause of confined space fatalities
- Many confined space incidents involve faulty or improperly used monitoring equipment
- Oxygen-deficient environments can incapacitate a worker in seconds
- OSHA requires continuous atmospheric monitoring in permit-required confined spaces

Words of Wisdom

- If you're not measuring the space, you're guessing.
- A monitor in the wrong place is a blindfold.

Pause and Think

Confined space monitoring feels technical, so people assume it's being done correctly once the device is powered on. But monitoring is only as good as the sampling point. When the hose is outside the space, the crew is relying on data that doesn't reflect reality. That gap between perception and actual conditions is where serious incidents happen.

- Where should the sampling hose be positioned?
- What changes inside a confined space that might not be detected outside?
- Who is responsible for verifying monitor placement?