**Manure Pits**

When we start the growing season in the spring, one of the first tasks is to fertilize the fields. This may involve pumping manure from the pit into the manure spreader. This procedure probably has been done on farm many times without incident, so workers could become complacent while working around these confined spaces. Forgetting the possible dangers that may loom within the pit from toxic gases to drowning.

When working in and around manure pits, consider this a high hazard task. Conditions can change from week to week, day to day, and even hour to hour. Gasses can build up quickly. It is best practice not to enter the manure pit but if it becomes necessary to go in, it is important to test the environment for toxic gasses before entering. Ensure there is adequate ventilation. Wear the appropriate PPE based on the conditions and ensure to have at least two gas monitors continuously measuring environmental conditions. Be trained in confined space to understand safety measures to be taken while working in this space and the importance of having someone monitor conditions while you are working in the space. The monitor also plays an important roll if hazard controls fail, as this person is available to initiate the rescue and evacuation plan and calls for emergency services.

The breakdown of waste that occurs in manure pits can create oxygen-deficient, toxic, and/or explosive atmospheres. The anaerobic bacterial action that breaks down the manure can generate methane, hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide, and ammonia gases. These gases may produce toxic effects, and can displace oxygen in the confined space. Death can occur from lack of oxygen or from the toxic effects of these gases. Methane and hydrogen sulfide can also be potential explosion hazards.

For your confined space training needs reach out to [Safety Services Nova Scotia](https://www.safetyservicesns.ca/confined-space-entry) to register for the next course.

To prevent animals, workers, kids, and the public from accidently falling into manure pits, it is best practice to ensure there is a barrier surrounding the manure pit such as a fence. Erect signage letting everyone know that there is a risk of falling and drowning. Place warning signs at each main access point to the manure pit and in areas where it would be possible to gain access.

Be sure to [MIND THE GAP! FARM-FARM-FARM](https://farmsafetyns.ca/mind-the-gap/) when working around manure pits. First Always Right Minded (FARM) by following general safe work practices and having positive communication with other workers on the farm. First Always Right Minded (FARM) by following the best practice for working around manure pits, and following the Farm Safety Plan. Fatigue at Risk Management (FARM) by taking breaks, rotating workers and ensuring workers are getting enough sleep to prevent fatigue which can be an underlying cause to incidents that may occur based on the risk of complacency and cutting corners to get the job done faster.

When you [MIND THE GAP (GOOD ANALYTICAL PRACTICE)](https://farmsafetyns.ca/mind-the-gap/), everyone has a greater chance at going home at the end of the day in the same condition they arrived. Conduct a hazard assessment to identify the hazards associated with the task and control the identified hazards before starting work.

**Manure Pits – DISCUSSION RECORD**

**Agenda:**

* Review the Manure Pit Best Practice on your farm.
* Determine if confined space training is needed.
* Check gas monitors and harnesses to ensure appropriate and in good condition.
* Discuss common hazards of the farm specific conveyor make and model.

Comments or safety concerns as a result of the discussion or observed since the last rally?

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Follow-up to concerns raised at previous rally?
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Action Items?
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Near Miss/Incidents/Unsafe Acts/Conditions to Report?

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Topics recommended for future Rallies: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank the rally members for their participation.**

**Quiz Answers:** 1. T, 2. T, 3. e, 4. e

**TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

1. Working around manure pits is considered to be a high hazard task which can be fatal.  True or False

2. Training workers in confined space entry and awarenesswill educate the workers on how to safely work in such conditions. True or False

3. Gases that may exist in a manure pit may include:

1. Methane
2. Hydrogen Sulfide
3. Carbon Dioxide
4. Ammonia
5. All of the Above

4. The following best practices are key in preventing incident and injury when working around manure pits:

1. Confined Space Training
2. Barriers placed around the Manure Pit
3. Warning signs posted around Manure Pit
4. Mind the GAP! FARM-FARM-FARM
5. All of the above

**Attendance RECORD**

\*This is to acknowledge that I understand and agree to actively participate in the safety meeting.

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| **Print Name:** | **Signature:** |
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