Fire Watch General Safety Fatality File

Worker Dies During Hot Work

In November 2011, two contractors at the E. I. DuPont De Nemours Co. located in Buffalo, New York, were performing welding atop a 10,000-gallon slurry tank when hot sparks ignited flammable vapors, causing an explosion that killed one contractor and seriously injured another.

The CSB’s final report and safety video, entitled “Hot Work: Hidden Hazards,” were released at an April 19, 2012, public meeting.

A primary cause of the blast was established by the CSB as the failure of the company to require that the interior of storage tanks—on which hot work was to be performed—be monitored for flammable vapor.

The CSB issued a recommendation urging DuPont to require monitoring inside and around storage tanks prior to performing any hot work.