

WCFSA August 2017

Luke Vaughn from Lanier Upshaw opened the meeting with a welcome to all attendees. Introduced were Jodie Ciccarello with Safety Products Inc. and Janine Bain with Goodwill. Along with Luke they administer the Alliance organization and can be contacted for any needs. The WCFSA is a non-profit safety alliance made up of safety professionals, government agencies, distributors, an OSHA representative –Joan Spencer – and other interested individuals to educate and promote a safe and healthy workplace. Go to the website and take a look at our offerings. We have upcoming a talk on the new silica standard by Joan spencer, Behavioral Based Safety, looking at covering the medical marijuana issues, and in December will be our annual holiday lunch. For January 2018, we'll be meeting at the Safety Now seminar.

Today's speaker is Scott Williamson from Safety Products, Inc.
Scott is a Certified Instrumentation Repair Tech

Gas Detection Made Easy! article on website

The most important step in gas detection is reading the owner's manual regardless of the manufacturer of your testing equipment.

Bump testing is the method to use to verify your system is working correctly. You want to test to prolong the life of your equipment and for the safety of your employees.

To also prolong the life your equipment you want to make you use the appropriate cleaning agents. Do not clean with any alcohol or any silica based products – it gets on the sensor and your detector may think this is the new baseline. Clean your equipment with warm, soapy water. You should also change the filter(s) regularly. Test the equipment before each use. Each manufacturer will have recommended calibration timelines. Remember, that is just a recommendation, you should do this often. Make sure if you are going down a hole, you came back up!

When your monitor alarm goes off, don't shortcut by turning off/on again quickly. You must wait for the reset. You have zeroed out the atmosphere and you may have gas present that could ultimately be harmful – also your equipment must be recalibrated. If you don't do this, you are risking the life of your employees.

Sensors have a shelf life – don't stockpile sensors – they are readily available use fresh sensors.

Replaceable sensors vs disposable – disposables are a smart idea – you get your money out of it. They are especially a good tool to have if you are using it every day. Carry it with you always.

Also, don't leave equipment for a long period of time without charging it. You can't overcharge the battery – once full it will shut itself off. The same thing that happens to your flashlight – the alkaline batteries leak – will happen to your sensors. Don't leave your meters on the dashboard or even the seat of your vehicle.

Make sure you have a compliance based testing process. You must follow correct procedure to have an accurate reading of atmosphere. Be wary of water sucked up into a hose as it will contaminate the process. Hydrosulfate buildup routinely creates explosions in sewer systems. The location you are working in may be fine, but a cover opened up down the line may send gas your way.

There were several fatalities in a recent incident. There was a blower 25' away, yet a worker entered the confined space and passed out – ultimately three workers did this. Upon arrival, the fire dept. rescuer couldn't fit in the hole with his breathing equipment so he removed it; he almost succumbs, and fortunately gets pulled out by fourth man who is also engulfed in the gas.

OSHA monitoring standards include need for two monitors, the person in the hole & the monitor outside the hole. Remember fines have increased and can go out to shareholders and owners. A company can be put out of business from one infraction. There is a mandate from OSHA. Testing is required more frequently in construction than in general industry. The thought process here is that general industry should have already identified the hazard. Don't use a monitor on a string! Not safe. Ventilation is KEY!

Technology is changing constantly, there is always something new out there. Benzene is coming up as a gas to be monitored.

Best practices are to ventilate & constantly monitor your hole.

Remember that your testing equipment is a life safety device – they can literally save lives.