



GAS MONITORS

This display shows how to use and check gas monitors relevant to farm work.

What kinds of stories would make you think about this resource?

- Fatality of a farmer in a manure pit
- Fatality of manure handler / “honey truck”, including standing on top
- Fatality entering grain bin/silo

What is the risk to Ag Workers?

Many farming activities can generate hazardous gases that can injure or kill people and livestock. You cannot smell these gases when it is in dangerous concentrations, so monitors are useful to warn of dangerous concentrations. Critical examples include:

- Hydrogen sulfide (H_2S) and methane are generated in stored manure (become free when manure is agitated/pumped).
- Carbon monoxide can be generated from overheating equipment, smoldering grains, and poorly operating heaters/dryers.



Are there recent news stories on these hazards? Below are all Hydrogen Sulfide

- June 2024, NY: [Man died after falling into manure tanker at a NY Farm](#)
- Aug 2021, OH: [3 Men die in manure pit](#) (synopsis story)
- July 2015, IA: [Iowa father, son die from manure pit fumes](#) (note: gas, not fume)

How do we approach the question of Gas Monitors in an ag story?

Any time someone enters a manure pit or grain bin, the air should be considered “suspect” and should be tested to make sure it has sufficient oxygen and no hazardous gases that are known to exist in these environments. A good rule of thumb is “if anything can decay in a space with little air movement, presume it has hydrogen sulfide until you confirm otherwise with a monitor.” Ask:

- Did the farm have a gas monitor? If yes, did they test the space before entering/wear it? Did they bump check it so they knew it would still be able to sense and alarm if the gas is present?
- If no, is there anyone in this community that has a gas monitor to borrow (fire station, neighbor, extension office)?

If you are on a farm, how do you protect yourself from this hazard?

Without a monitor that has confirmed safe air, do not: enter a manure pit, approach/enter a building that is being pumped, enter a grain bin (emptied or otherwise), enter a grain silo.