Understanding Your Role as a Shipyard Competent Person

A shipyard competent person (SCP) ensures safe working conditions at shipyards by determining whether a space is safe for workers to enter or perform hot work. Prior to serving as an SCP, an individual must meet the requirements of 29 CFR 1915.7.

Reducing or Eliminating Workplace Hazards

Employers are responsible for controlling and correcting any hazards identified before work begins.

A SCP must be able to recognize and evaluate worker exposures to hazardous substances or other unsafe conditions, such as:

- Damaged or missing access ladders or stairs;
- Electrical hazards;
- Insufficient lighting; and
- Potential sources for slips, trips, and falls.
SCPs must also be proficient in many other tasks, including:

- Inspecting, testing and evaluating spaces for oxygen content, flammability, and toxicity.
- Initiating the use of suitable ventilation where unsafe atmospheric conditions exist.
- Monitoring spaces, as often as necessary, to ensure safe atmospheric conditions are maintained during work.
- Directing the use of appropriate equipment and components in confined and enclosed spaces, or surrounding areas, where there is the potential for flammable atmospheres.
- Understanding when, where and for how long the posting of fire watches is necessary.
- Inspecting structural voids and, if necessary, testing for the presence of flammable liquids or vapors before hot work begins.
- Carrying out NFPA-certified Marine Chemist instructions and knowing when to call them.
- Maintaining records of tests, inspections, and operations performed, including test results and any instructions.

See the Evaluating Shipyard Competent Person Programs fact sheet to learn more about the qualifications, training, and duties of a SCP.