Divers Die When Trapped By Water Pressure

Two commercial divers drowned when they became trapped by a water leak on a seaway lock.

The first diver went down to inspect a malfunctioning underwater valve. He became trapped because water leaking to the dry side of the lock created high water pressure which trapped him against the lock. The second diver tried to rescue him and was also trapped.

The work situation may be unusual, but the safety principles involved in this incident are common. Diving underwater is similar to entering a confined space. Rescuers are often killed as they try to save a co-worker trapped in a confined space. Safety training and examination of the work area for hazards are necessary in any work situation. While diving near a pressure structure such as this – or entering a confined space – it is important to carefully follow safety procedures. Use a lifeline so you can be rescued if something goes wrong and have someone watching to help you if you get into trouble.