Three Workers Found Dead in Tank

Three workers were found dead in a tank containing a pipeline adhesive, which gives off highly toxic fumes from the solvent toluene.

Since an autopsy revealed no injuries to any of the workers, it is assumed that one entered the tank to perhaps retrieve a dropped object. Then, it appeared that the other two tried to rescue him, but all three were overcome.

Incidents involving confined spaces will often turn into a “domino like” tragedy. Fatality files are filled with stories about those who have innocently attempted to rescue the first victim, and then of someone else who attempted to rescue the second, then the third, and so on…

This is why any correctly drawn up confined space entry procedure will always include a watchman and the proper breathing equipment.

If you are a foreman or supervisor, please see that those who work under your supervision and trust know better than to enter unsafe situations. And most importantly remember that it is regular safety training meetings that will ultimately save the lives of those who could be involved in one of these seemingly routine but potentially fatal situations.