



Protect Workers from Wet Grain Engulfment Hazards

Wet weather conditions increase the risk of engulfment for workers inside grain bins. Moisture content causes grain to bridge or clump together. Workers who step onto the bridge to loosen grain from side walls can be buried if the bridge collapses or causes an avalanche under the worker's weight.

Take the following steps to prevent engulfments:

- Never walk on the grain to make it flow.
- Use a rod or vibration system to break up clumped grain from a safe location outside of the bin.
- Train workers, and provide them with body harnesses that have an attached lifeline and other rescue equipment.
- Disconnect, lockout, and tagout machinery, and block-off all powered equipment, especially grain-moving equipment (like augers).
- Before entering a bin, test the air inside to ensure there is enough oxygen and no toxic and/or flammable gas.
- Have a rescue-trained observer stationed outside who is in constant contact with worker.

OSHA's [Grain Handling](#) webpage provides information on how to recognize and prevent grain bin hazards, including a [hazard alert](#) and [fact sheet](#).

OSHA's [On-Site Consultation Program](#) offers no-cost and confidential occupational safety and health compliance assistance to small and medium sized businesses. Consultation services are separate from enforcement and do not result in penalties or citations. The [OSHA Training Institute Education Centers](#) offer courses for workers, employers, and managers on hazard recognition and abatement at convenient locations nationwide.

OSHA issues alerts to draw attention to worker safety and health issues and solutions.