§ 1917.23 Hazardous atmospheres and substances (see also § 1917.2 Hazardous cargo, material, substance or atmosphere).

(a) Purpose and scope. This section covers areas in which the employer is aware that a hazardous atmosphere or substance may exist, except where one or more of the following sections apply: §1917.22 Hazardous cargo; §1917.24 Carbon monoxide; §1917.25 Fumigants, pesticides, insecticides and hazardous preservatives; §1917.73 Terminal facilities handling menhaden and similar species of fish; §1917.152 Welding, cutting, and heating (hot work); and §1917.153 Spray painting.

(b) Determination of hazard. (1) When the employer is aware that a room, building, vehicle, railcar, or other space contains or has contained a hazardous atmosphere, a designated and appropriately equipped person shall test the atmosphere before employee entry to determine whether a hazardous atmosphere exists.

(2) Records of results of any tests required by this section shall be maintained for at least thirty (30) days.

(c) Testing during ventilation. When mechanical ventilation is used to maintain a safe atmosphere, tests shall be made by a designated person to ensure that the atmosphere is not hazardous.

(d) Entry into hazardous atmospheres. Only designated persons shall enter hazardous atmospheres, in which case the following shall apply:

(1) Persons entering a space containing a hazardous atmosphere shall be protected by respiratory and emergency protective equipment meeting the requirements of subpart E of this part;

2 The Department of Transportation and the United States Coast Guard apply requirements related to handling, storing and transportation of hazardous cargo (see 33 CFR part 129, 46 CFR, 49 CFR).