

September 1997



***MAN KILLED IN CALIFORNIA
CARGO TANK WELDING
ACCIDENT!***

***SHOP WORKER KILLED IN
NEW JERSEY EXPLOSION!***

***SERIOUS INJURY IN
MIDWESTERN TANK
REPAIR SHOP!***

U.S. Department of Transportation
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

THESE ARE EXAMPLES of what is becoming a pattern of cargo tank incidents throughout the country. Recently an MC306 cargo tank exploded while repair work was being completed at a Midwestern cargo tank inspection and repair facility. The inspector was on top of the tank performing repairs at the time of the explosion and was seriously injured. The four-compartmented tank trailer last contained gasoline and apparently had not been adequately cleaned and purged prior to the repair work being performed. The explosion completely opened up the tank from front to back, blowing out all the baffles and bulkheads.

The U.S. Department of Transportation reminds all transportation industries of the potential danger posed by transporting hazardous materials in cargo tanks. When conducting repair work or testing of these vessels, particular care needs to be given in determining what the tank contains or what it last contained, and ensuring that the tank is sufficiently cleaned and purged of all hazardous materials. In addition, special care needs to be taken to ensure that void spaces between compartments and vapor recovery systems are cleared of flammable gases before conducting repair work.

To reduce the possibility of having an incident, employees performing inspection, testing, or repair of cargo tanks must receive proper hazardous materials training including:

- (1) General hazardous materials awareness training to enable the employees to recognize and identify a hazardous material by its placard or other hazard communication;
- (2) Function-specific training on the requirements of their job such as ensuring tanks are cleaned and purged before conducting repairs; and
- (3) Safety training on emergency response information, measures of protection against hazardous materials, and ways to avoid accidents.

On Guard