

Irrigation & Manure Pit Safety: Drowning & Gas Exposure Risks

Why It Matters:

Manure pits and irrigation ponds pose drowning risks and release toxic gases that can be fatal in enclosed spaces.

Key Safety Points:

- Always use proper ventilation before entering manure storage areas.
- Hydrogen sulfide, methane, and ammonia from manure pits can cause unconsciousness in seconds—never enter alone.
- If a worker collapses in a pit, do not jump in to rescue them—call emergency services and use proper retrieval equipment.
- Mark irrigation ditches and ponds clearly to prevent accidental falls.
- Never operate pumps or aerators alone—always have a buddy system in place.

Real-Life Risks:

- Multiple farmers have died from toxic gas exposure while working near manure pits.
- Children and workers have drowned after falling into uncovered irrigation ponds.

Discussion Questions:

- How can we improve manure pit safety on our farm?
- What's the safest way to respond if someone falls into a pit or pond?