

Manure on farms can pose more problems than just the odor. Dangers lurk in the manure itself and how it's stored.

Gases and odors may be a nuisance for many livestock producers and those that live nearby, but it can also lead to life-threatening dangers in confinement and manure pits. Manure in confined areas releases gases that can become toxic, even deadly, at certain levels. There is also a risk of explosion.

It is difficult to know when air quality problems will occur. The best precaution is to understand the sources of air quality problems and what to do to reduce or eliminate them. Monitors can also be purchased to detect dangerous levels.

Remember, children who are less knowledgeable than adults may be at the greatest risk. Curiosity can lure children into dangerous situations where they may become the next victim to a deadly gas.

To prevent exposure to the dangers of manure gas everyone in the family should follow these rules:

- ▶ Never enter a manure pit
- ▶ If you must enter, use a self-contained breathing apparatus (requires training to use correctly)
- ▶ A safety harness should be worn by anyone entering a storage area
- ▶ Label manure pits and storage areas to warn of the hazards
- ▶ Obtain and use monitoring equipment of gas levels
- ▶ Never enter a building when manure is being agitated
- ▶ Always use maximum ventilation during agitation
- ▶ Be sure manure pit covers are secure and in good condition
- ▶ Be sure all lagoons are adequately fenced

Never try to rescue someone who is unconscious in a manure storage structure unless you have the proper equipment and knowledge of the situation. Multiple deaths can occur because rescuers succumb to the same gases as the victim.

Often an untrained rescuer succumbs to the fumes as well and becomes a second victim.

