Opening thief hatches of storage tanks can lead to the rapid release of high concentrations of hydrocarbon gases and vapors. These may result in very low oxygen levels and toxic and flammable conditions around and over the hatch. Recent reports have documented fires or explosions, and described workers experiencing dizziness, fainting, headache, nausea, and, in some cases, death while gauging tanks, collecting samples, or transferring fluids.

Tank gauging, thefting, and fluid handling can be performed safely with proper precautions. Your employer has established safety procedures for your protection.

Must Conduct Exposure and Hazard Assessments at Worksites to determine needs for:
- Engineering Controls
- Respiratory Protection
- PPE

Must Provide Training to Workers:
- Hazard Communication
- Lone Worker Policy
- Proper use of PPE and respiratory protection
- Types, use, and limits of respiratory protection equipment as appropriate
- Recognizing ignition sources

Should Implement Engineering Controls such as:
- Remote Gauging
- Closed Loop Systems
- Auto Gauging

Verify sub-contractors are following work practices/procedures.

Everyone has the right to STOP work that is unsafe.