

“Rapid Excavation Machine”—Tunnel boring machines, shields, roadheaders, or any other similar excavation machine.

[54 FR 23850, June 2, 1989; 58 FR 35311, June 30, 1993, as amended at 61 FR 5510, Feb. 13, 1996; 63 FR 1297, Jan. 8, 1998; 71 FR 16674, Apr. 3, 2006]

#### § 1926.801 Caissons.

(a) Wherever, in caisson work in which compressed air is used, and the working chamber is less than 11 feet in length, and when such caissons are at any time suspended or hung while work is in progress so that the bottom of the excavation is more than 9 feet below the deck of the working chamber, a shield shall be erected therein for the protection of the employees.

(b) Shafts shall be subjected to a hydrostatic or air-pressure test, at which pressure they shall be tight. The shaft shall be stamped on the outside shell about 12 inches from each flange to show the pressure to which they have been subjected.

(c) Whenever a shaft is used, it shall be provided, where space permits, with a safe, proper, and suitable staircase for its entire length, including landing platforms, not more than 20 feet apart. Where this is impracticable, suitable ladders shall be installed with landing platforms located about 20 feet apart to break the climb.

(d) All caissons having a diameter or side greater than 10 feet shall be provided with a man lock and shaft for the exclusive use of employees.

(e) In addition to the gauge in the locks, an accurate gauge shall be maintained on the outer and inner side of each bulkhead. These gauges shall be accessible at all times and kept in accurate working order.

(f) In caisson operations where employees are exposed to compressed air working environments, the requirements contained in §1926.803 shall be complied with.

#### § 1926.802 Cofferdams.

(a) If overtopping of the cofferdam by high waters is possible, means shall be provided for controlled flooding of the work area.

(b) Warning signals for evacuation of employees in case of emergency shall be developed and posted.

(c) Cofferdam walkways, bridges, or ramps with at least two means of rapid exit shall be provided with guardrails as specified in subpart M of this part.

(d) Cofferdams located close to navigable shipping channels shall be protected from vessels in transit, where possible.

#### § 1926.803 Compressed air.

(a) *General provisions.* (1) There shall be present, at all times, at least one competent person designated by and representing the employer, who shall be familiar with this subpart in all respects, and responsible for full compliance with these and other applicable subparts.

(2) Every employee shall be instructed in the rules and regulations which concern his safety or the safety of others.

(b) *Medical attendance, examination, and regulations.* (1) There shall be retained one or more licensed physicians familiar with and experienced in the physical requirements and the medical aspects of compressed air work and the treatment of decompression illness. He shall be available at all times while work is in progress in order to provide medical supervision of employees employed in compressed air work. He shall himself be physically qualified and be willing to enter a pressurized environment.

(2) No employee shall be permitted to enter a compressed air environment until he has been examined by the physician and reported by him to be physically qualified to engage in such work.

(3) In the event an employee is absent from work for 10 days, or is absent due to sickness or injury, he shall not resume work until he is reexamined by the physician, and his physical condition reported, as provided in this paragraph, to be such as to permit him to work in compressed air.

(4) After an employee has been employed continuously in compressed air for a period designated by the physician, but not to exceed 1 year, he shall be reexamined by the physician to determine if he is still physically qualified to engage in compressed air work.