

GAS FREE MEASUREMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS

International regulations and quality requirements necessitate the fumigation of goods and commodities, prior to transport or during a ship's voyage. In many cases only limited attention is paid to thorough ventilation and the verification of gas concentration levels upon arrival. Often cargoes are not sufficient or not carefully ventilated before they reach their destinations. Consequently, increased risks for unsafe discharge or subsequent storage arise from the presence of chemical agents at concentrations above the threshold limit value (TLV) or maximum accepted concentration (MAC).

Today, gas free measurement not only relates to products used for plant quarantine measures or disinfection, but equally to gases and vapors that dissipate from goods themselves, such as solvents from leather and shoes or formaldehyde from furniture.

Verification of concentrations of noxious substances or oxygen concentrations is a crucial requirement for all transported cargoes or goods stored in confined spaces. If concentrations measured are not in line with international regulations, careful ventilation is required prior to further discharge. If people involved in handling the goods are unaware of the safety issues and basic procedures are not followed, they could be exposed to dangerous substances and suffer harm.

For obvious reasons, port authorities will additionally refuse discharge of the cargo and goods in case the concentration of fumigants and vapours is too high. This can result in costly delays and issues in the logistic chain.

SGS assesses and monitors risks related to a wide range of gasses and vapours in Hamburg – Le Havre range or at inland locations upon your request. Based on a risk assessment common fumigants are measured as also are formaldehyde, aromatic hydrocarbons and many other



volatile compounds. In good communication with stakeholders and authorities, and provided all safety requirements are met, SGS takes care that discharge or handling can take place with shortest possible delay. Our licensed fumigator will monitor all potentially hazardous areas and ensure the safety of the workers involved.

If remnants of fumigant formulations such as sleeves, blankets or plates with metal phosphide need to be removed, due care is taken in handling and disposing of residues according to environmental regulations.

Cargoes and containers with The Netherlands as final destination need special attention. Unlike many other destinations, regulatory requirements in The Netherlands call for the measurement of gasses up to one meter depth in the cargo. This approach originates from the use of fumigants probed in the cargo in dry and cold conditions which leads to catastrophic safety hazards due to insufficiently reacted product at arrival.

For these supply chains a better practice is to use retrievable formulations, to discard them prior to arrival and to start ventilation as soon as possible. SGS can perform these interventions at many points of interception, e.g. in a stop-over port or during bunkering.

It is in the interest of all parties involved

that care is taken to protect all involved in handling goods. With many years of experience and an elaborated network, SGS has an expert team of licensed fumigators with state of the art equipment at your service. Accurate measurements followed by issuance of a gas-free certificate will allow safe and swift operations. If required, solutions for handling dangerous waste are just part of the service.

CONTACT

Johan Pype
Business Manager
t: +32 (0)3 570 97 50
e: johan.pype@sgs.com