



High-pressure compressor explodes on vessel

Diving cylinders were being filled with nitrox (oxygen-enriched air) from a high-pressure dive compressor. Without warning, the compressor — located in the hold of the vessel — exploded. Fortunately, the workers who were on the vessel at the time were not injured. However, the explosion caused extensive damage. Preliminary information suggests that the compressor was intended for use with normal compressed air only — not with nitrox.

Safe work practices:

- Before using nitrox, ensure that all equipment and components are compatible with pumping or transferring it. Do not use nitrox with compressors designed to be used with regular air only.
- Ensure that documentation is readily available for inspection to confirm that equipment and components are compatible with nitrox.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the use, maintenance, and repair of compressors.
- Inspect compressors regularly — including all fittings and connections — to prevent unsafe work conditions from developing.
- Develop and enforce written safe work procedures for using compressors.

