

Sewer gas blamed in worker's collapse

A 51-year-old man was hospitalized in stable condition after apparently being overcome by sewer-line gases and falling down a sewer manhole yesterday.

The man, an employee of contractor, was removing equipment after workers had painted the interior of the sewer line. He was climbing up a metal ladder out of the manhole near around 1:30 p.m. when he collapsed, slid down about eight feet and landed in sewer water.

It took fire crews about 20 minutes to lift the man out by rope, said Capt. Richard Soo, spokesman for the Fire Department. The man was unconscious and taken to Medical Center in stable condition.

Fire crews believe that the man was overcome by hydrogen sulfide gases.

"They measured it at 100 parts per million, which they tell me is considered very high,". "Fortunately, the man did not fall head-first into the sewer water, which would have made the rescue more difficult."

The man's supervisor said workers had finished painting the sewer interior yesterday morning. The company is contracted to do many sewer repair and maintenance projects.



A supervisor with the XYZ contracting company, retrieves the cover of the manhole where a worker was overcome by fumes and had to be lifted out by fire rescuers.