

## Weekly Safety Meeting

### Confined Space

# Confined Space “Definition/Recognition”



*The qualified person who directs the confined space operation should be designated by the employer, in writing, as capable (by education and/or specialized training) of anticipating, recognizing and evaluating employee exposure to hazardous substances or other unsafe conditions in a confined space.*

**The qualified person should:**

- Be able to define a confined space;
- Have knowledge of testing procedures and testing equipment;
- Be familiar with the physical characteristics, configuration, and location of a confined space;
- Know what to look for in a confined space worksite (e.g., existing and potential hazards, such as oxygen deficiency, flammable/explosive atmospheres, toxic atmospheres, etc.);
- Know how to administer a confined space entry permit;
- Be familiar with ventilation system design and installation;
- Take responsibility for supervision of the confined space program;
- Schedule stand-by personnel when personnel enter a confined space area;
- Have appropriate knowledge of steps to take concerning energy sources that are potentially hazardous and should be locked out, disconnected, relieved and/or restrained before any entry into confined spaces.

**Management is responsible** for determining the qualification of the person who will be designated as the qualified person.

**Here's what confined spaces** are in the construction industry:

Configurations such as tanks, vessels, silos, vaults, pits, shafts, pipelines, ducts, sewers, manholes, tunnels which:

- 1) may have limited means of egress
- 2) are not designed for continuous employee occupancy, and
- 3) one or more of the following characteristics may have a hazardous atmospheric conditions (improper oxygen levels, combustible atmospheric condition, or toxic atmospheric conditions)

**Here's an outline of where to begin, how to accomplish a confined space policy, and who is accountable:**

**Planning sessions by qualified personnel:**

- Schedule of jobsites where confined space conditions exist;
- Work to be accomplished;
- Designated personnel;
- Hazard assessment;

**Testing of atmosphere:**

- Cleaning/purging/ventilating;
- Study of worksite conditions;

**Ventilation:**

- Drawing air out of space,
- Blowing clean air into space;
- Using only explosion proof equipment;
- Retesting of air before entry;

**Training personnel:**

- Emergency entry/exit procedures;
- Use of proper respirators;
- First-Aid/CPR;
- Rescue training/drills;

**Lockout/Tagout:**

- Check existing electrical equipment;
- Posting jobsites where entry is prohibited by non-qualified personnel;

**Standby personnel/communications:**

- Buddy system;
- Hand held radios;

**Tools and equipment:**

- Approved electrical equipment only;
- Proper safety lines/lighting;

**Entry permits:**

- Company adopted entry permitting processes;
- Notification procedures;
- Who approves;

**Continuous monitoring of atmosphere:**

- Who monitors;
- Type of equipment to be used;
- Who gives "all clear";

**Record keeping**

- Training;
- Safety drills;
- Inspection of equipment;
- Test results of atmosphere.

**In some areas**, Federal, state or regional safety agencies have adopted systems whereby the contractor responsible for a confined space jobsite must pursue an entry permit process.

**A survey should** be conducted on all jobsites to identify confined space conditions. Hazards should be identified for each confined space. A review of the conditions should center on:

- Physical characteristic, configuration, and location of the confined space;
  - Existing and potential hazards, such as oxygen deficiency, flammable/explosive atmospheres, and toxic atmospheres;
  - Mechanical hazards;
- Based on the evaluation of the hazards, a qualified person should classify the confined space as a permit required confined space (PRCS) or a non-permit confined space (NPCS).

**If a permit is deemed** necessary, it would require the following data:

- Date of entry;
- Location of entry;
- Type of work to be performed in the confined space area;
- Hazards to be controlled or eliminated prior to entry;
- Safety equipment required;
- Safety precautions required on the job;
- Type of atmospheric tests and the results of those tests;
- Type of rescue equipment that will be needed;
- Duration of the permit;
- Space for approval authority

*In a confined space operation, control is centered around one individual whether it be the company safety director, the superintendent, a competent person, or some other employee. The company safety policy should clearly identify this individual. The Entry Supervisor is the Captain of the ship (the confined space).*

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