

CONFINED SPACE ENTRY

An estimated 60% of the fatalities have been among the would-be rescuers. Unless you are trained in confined space hazards and how to control them, never enter a confined space.

A confined space is any enclosed or partially enclosed space that you are able to enter with restricted entry or exit that is not designed or intended for continuous human occupancy.

Some examples of confined spaces include: tanks, access shafts, utility vaults, sewers, pipes, truck or rail tank cars, boilers, manholes, silos and storage bins.



There are five features of a Permit Required Confined Space

- A person is able to physically enter the space (any part of their body).
- It is not primarily designed or intended for humans to enter except for the purpose of work.
- It has a restricted means of entrance and exit by way of location, size or access.
 - OSHA Definition: A condition that has a potential to impede an employee's movement into or out of a confined space. A space has limited or restricted means of entry or exit, if an entrant's ability to escape in an emergency would be hindered. Examples include, but are not limited to, trip hazards, poor illumination, slippery floors, inclining surfaces and ladders.
- It has poor natural ventilation or a hazardous atmosphere.
- It may become hazardous due to design, materials, or substances inside, or the work/activities being carried out inside.

Risks

- Poor Air Quality: atmospheres with an oxygen content less than 19.5% (deficient) or more than 23% (enriched) are not safe.
- Toxic Gasses: hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, smoke, ammonia, chlorine, etc. are all potentially deadly.
- Flammable Atmospheres: a highly explosive atmosphere can be created when finely ground combustible materials such as grain, carbon, cellulose, fibers, plastics or flammable liquids or gas are present.
- Mechanical, Electrical or Physical Hazards: examples include moving parts, structural hazards, noise, temperature, visibility, etc.
- Loose Materials that may Engulf or Smother: shifting or collapse of bulk material, barrier failures, etc.

Prevention

The dangers and risks associated with confined spaces are not always obvious. All hazards must be identified and either eliminated prior to entry. All precautions are taken for the safety of the person entering the confined space.

Before entering any confined space:

Go to www.iws.support and fill out the Safety Support Ticket located at the Forms tab the best you can. When you submit the form the safety department will get involved to make sure you have all the right procedures, make sure your workers are all trained, make sure you have the right entry, communication, and rescue tools. Safety will support your project from beginning to end via this process.

Do not start a Confined Space Entry without a completed Safety Support Ticket, it is your required Hazard Assessment!