



Working Safely in Confined Spaces

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Confined space defined:

A confined space is an enclosed or partially enclosed space not designated or intended for continuous human occupancy that has a restricted or impeded means of entry or exit because of its construction and may become hazardous to a worker when entering it because of:

- An atmosphere that is or may be injurious by reason of oxygen deficiency or enrichment, flammability, explosivity or toxicity (**atmospheric hazards**)
- A condition or a changing set of circumstances within the space that presents a potential for injury or illness (**potential hazards in the space**)
- The potential or inherent characteristics of an activity that can produce adverse or harmful consequences within the space (**hazards associated with the task**).

Examples: Newly constructed manholes, sewer/water pipe assemblies, foundation/attic crawl spaces, utility vaults, elevator pits, access tunnels, trenching operations, large boilers, storage silos.

Steps for protecting frontline workers:

1. Create and/or review a comprehensive, thorough workplan, including consideration for simultaneous work activities, sensitive timelines, and changing conditions.
2. Perform an initial hazard assessment for confined space entry.
3. Hold a pre-entry safety meeting that covers: a review of code of practice, job safety analysis, address task competency needs, and workflow plan.
4. Receive and review the entry permit, confirming critical items/actions and energy isolation.
5. Verify the rescue plan, confirming effectiveness of plan, worker responsibilities, and rescuers' equipment is present for potential scenarios to be encountered.
6. Conduct atmospheric testing of confined space to be entered, using Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), and prepare for continuous and/or periodic testing as required.
7. Confirm the Field Level Hazard Assessment and prepare to enter space.

Key takeaways:

- Confined Spaces are inherently dangerous by design
- Ensure training for confined space staff matches their specific work environments
- Focus attention on the direct controls and project how you can fail safely