



From 2011 to 2018, 1,030 workers have died from injuries involving confined spaces.

Confined spaces are defined as:

- a space large enough to enter,
- has limited access and egress,
- is not intended for continuous human occupancy.

Examples include, but are not limited to, **tanks, pits, tunnels, vaults, and boilers.**

Confined spaces can be associated with physical and atmospheric hazards and will require a permit to enter if any hazard within the space cannot be mitigated or controlled prior to entry.

Confined spaces must be assumed to be immediately dangerous to life or health until proven otherwise.

Prior to employee entry, each confined space must be evaluated to identify current hazards and potential hazards of the space.

- Before entering the space, **the internal atmosphere shall be tested** with a calibrated direct reading instrument for oxygen content, flammable gases and vapors, and potential toxic air contaminants.
- Establish the physical characteristics of the confined space.
- Determine the current and past uses of the confined space that may affect oxygen level, toxicity, or flammability of the atmosphere.

- **Establish if there are any special hazards within the space**, such as engulfment hazards or dangerous machinery.
- Define any operations or processes to be carried out within the space that may result in creating a more hazardous atmosphere such as welding, grinding, or removal of toxic materials.

Establish a plan for working in the space that includes **a non-entry rescue plan.**

Follow all requirements for any permit required confined spaces

It is important to continually monitor the atmosphere with a calibrated direct reading instrument while working in a confined space. Note that when continually testing, it is imperative to test the breathing zone, defined by OSHA as the area within a ten-inch radius of the worker's face. If continuous monitoring deviates from acceptable limits, evacuate the space immediately to re-evaluate the space.

Identify all confined space locations and hazards that are present.

Do not enter a confined space until it has been evaluated and hazards have been controlled. Crossing the entry threshold in any fashion, even just reaching in, is entering the confined space. If you are not on the entry permit, do not enter the space.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. What 3 characteristics define a confined space?
2. Can your work create new hazards?
3. Which Policy covers confined spaces?