

Toolbox Talks

Weekly Tailgate Topic

12-27

DISCUSS WITH CREWS ON [INSERT DATE]

CONFINED SPACE ENTRY

- A confined space can be deadly. You must follow special precautions and procedures before you enter. Even if you just put your head through the opening, you are entering a confined space.
- **NEVER** enter a confined space unless you have the training and knowledge to work safely.

A. What's a confined space?

- A confined space is an enclosed or partially enclosed area that is big enough for a worker to enter.
- It is **not** designed for someone to work in regularly, but workers may need to enter the confined space for tasks such as inspection, cleaning, maintenance, and repair.
- Many confined spaces have small openings, which can make entry and exit difficult and can complicate rescue procedures.
- Some examples of confined spaces: tanks, boilers, silos, pipelines, sewers, storage bins, pits, sumps, manholes, water reservoirs etc.



Enter only when you KNOW it is safe.

B. Why are confined spaces deadly?

Entering a confined space without proper precautions could result in serious injuries or even in death. Why? Here are some examples:-

- **NOT ENOUGH OXYGEN**

If there is not enough oxygen in the air, you could die. If you enter a space without enough oxygen (or even place your head inside the opening), you may not be able to escape or call for help.

- **TOXIC GASES**

The space might contain a toxic gas. Work such as welding or painting inside the confined space might release deadly substances into the air. Toxic gases might enter the space from piping or another opening.

- **EXPLOSION**

You can't smell or see some explosive gases so you might not know they are in the air. A spark or other ignition source might result in an explosion. Many dusts and chemicals can also explode.

- **BEING TRAPPED, CRUSHED, OR BURIED**

Loose or unstable materials might fall on you and trap or bury you. A liquid, a hazardous gas, or steam might flow into the space. You might get caught in a piece of equipment that starts moving.

Confined spaces can be deadly spaces. Whenever possible, avoid entering these spaces.

If any material is accidentally spilled into a manhole, use a sucker truck or a piece of equipment that will allow you to clean up the debris from the outside.

C. How can workers be protected?

A company's confined space entry procedures should describe what needs to be done before workers can safely enter and work in a confined space. Supervisors and workers must follow the procedures to make sure work is performed safely.

1. **MAKE SURE A HAZARD ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN DONE.** A qualified person must identify the hazards and provide written procedures to eliminate or control the hazards.
2. **PLAN AHEAD.** Plan for a safe entry and have an emergency rescue plan.
3. **TEST THE AIR.** Check that there is enough oxygen and that other substances such as carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide and combustible gas, are at safe levels.
4. **VENTILATE THE SPACE.** Bring in enough fresh air so that the air you are breathing inside is safe to breathe.
5. **FOLLOW CSE PROCEDURES.** Before you enter a confined space, you must complete specific training. Do not put your head into a confined space without training.
6. **USE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT.** Make sure you have the equipment you need to get in and out safely and to work safely in the space.
7. **ADOPT EFFECTIVE CSE PERMIT SYSTEM AND USE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS.** Do not enter until all the safety precautions are in place and you have been authorized to enter.

Questions to Generate Discussion

- Give an example of a confined space on your job site.
- What kind of training do you need before entering a confined space?
- Discuss what processes in your line of work/jobsite that could create an atmospheric hazard in a confined space.