

Toolbox Talk

10. Confined Space Entry



What?

- A confined space can be any space of an enclosed nature where there is a risk of death or serious injury from hazardous substances or dangerous conditions (e.g. lack of oxygen). Some confined spaces are fairly easy to identify such as storage tanks, silos, reaction vessels, enclosed drains and sewers. Others may be less obvious but can be equally dangerous e.g. open top chambers, vats and duct work
- Some places may become confined spaces when work is carried out in them, or during their construction, fabrication or subsequent modification

Why?

- A number of people are killed or seriously injured in confined spaces each year. This happens in a wide range of industries, from those involving complex plant to simple storage vessels. Those killed include not only people working in the confined space but those who try to rescue them without proper training and equipment. Some people are harmed in “safe” areas such as toilets etc. because they introduce harmful substances in the course of doing work (e.g. tiling) and are overcome in what then becomes a confined space

Do



- ✓ Avoid entry into the space if the work can be done another way, or the space itself modified so that entry is not necessary
- ✓ Follow the Safe System and Permit requirements at all times
- ✓ Ensure everyone is properly trained
- ✓ Monitor conditions to ensure they remain safe
- ✓ Use Breathing Apparatus where appropriate
- ✓ Ensure there are suitable rescue arrangements
- ✓ Use intrinsically safe equipment
- ✓ Practice “man-down” procedures at least annually at each site
- ✓ Ensure that there is adequate ventilation
- ✓ Isolate the confined space properly to prevent harmful vapours or substances entering during the work

Don't



- ✗ Enter confined spaces without formal approval
- ✗ Remain in a vessel beyond the stipulated time
- ✗ Ignore any alarms - leave immediately
- ✗ Remove any breathing apparatus until clear of the confined space



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