



SafetyAlert

We're Serious About Safety

Confined Spaces in the Workplace

Each year many people die as a result of exposure to hazards in confined spaces. These hazards can be controlled, thus, preventing the loss of life. Many workplaces contain spaces that are considered to be "confined," because their configurations restrict the activities of any employees who must enter into, work in, and exit from them. In many instances, without proper work practices, employees who work in confined spaces can be exposed to significant hazards.



OSHA Definitions

OSHA defines a confined space as a space that has limited or restricted means of entry or exit, is large enough for an employee to enter to perform assigned tasks, and is not intended for continuous human occupancy.

A permit-required confined space is a confined space that meets one or more of the following criteria: 1) contains or has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere, 2) contains material that has the potential for engulfing an entrant, 3) has an internal configuration that may cause an entrant to become trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls, or by a downward sloping floor that tapers to a smaller cross section, 4) contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazard. Some examples of these types of spaces are: silos, hoppers, storage tanks, open top spaces more than 4 feet in depth, vessels, rail cars, sewer systems, manholes, utility vaults, boilers, as well as trenches and excavations.

For additional information, visit:

www.osha.gov/SLTC/confinedspaces/

Remember: Over 60% of the fatalities relating to confined spaces occur among the would-be rescuers. An adequate emergency response plan needs to be in place before entering the confined space.

General Industry & Construction - What is required?

OSHA sets forth the regulation for permit and non-permit confined space entry in the General Industry Standard 29 CFR 1910.146. General industry facilities are required to identify and label all confined spaces in the workplace.

The 1926.21 Construction Standard requires employees who enter confined spaces to be instructed about the nature of the hazards involved, the necessary precautions to be taken, the use of personal protective and emergency equipment, and trained on the topics that the OSHA standard specifies.

The 1926.21 Construction Standard requires employees who enter confined spaces to be instructed about the nature of the hazards involved, the necessary precautions to be taken, the use of personal protective and emergency equipment, and trained on the topics that the OSHA standard specifies. Employers must implement a written, confined space entry program, and have an authorized permit before employees enter a permit-required confined space. The employer must also provide for emergency and rescue services in a timely manner based on the hazards associated with the space being entered.



Beacon Mutual offers a variety of training opportunities for employees, supervisors and managers. Please check our seminar schedule for more information. www.beaconmutual.com

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