

Tools For Life - Weekly Safety Meeting



Home Safe Home Healthy

Date: August 2020

Confined Space



Confined Space” refers to a space which, by design, has limited openings for entry and exit, unfavorable natural ventilation which could contain or produce dangerous air contaminants, and which is not intended for continuous worker occupancy.

According to data collected by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) program, fatal injuries in confined spaces fluctuated from a low of 81 in 1998 to a high of 100 in 2000 during the five-year period, averaging 92 fatalities per year.

OSHA defines a confined space as a space that is:

1. Large enough to enter and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work
2. Has limited means for exit and entry (e.g., manholes, tanks, vessels, vaults, pipelines and pits)
3. Is not designed for continuous employee occupancy.

What are the hazards?

- Biological, Mechanical, Physical, Chemical or Atmospheric hazards may exist.
- The space maybe oxygen-deficient or oxygen-enriched. It may contain bacteria capable of producing flammable or toxic gases.
- Physical hazards such as electrical, radiological risks, unguarded machines or engulfment hazards that could surround a worker by a liquid or flowable solid.

How do we mitigate or control the hazards?

- ✓ Contact Apollo Safety and schedule a training class on confined space prior to performing any work.
- ✓ Do an initial survey. Remember that any confined space **MUST** be treated as permit-required confined space until the space has been determined to be free of hazards.
- ✓ Plan ahead, be prepared for “what it” situations and practice the response actions for when things go wrong.

Before you enter:

- ✓ Be sure everyone is properly trained, authorized, and you have a permit.
- ✓ Review Apollo’s Confined Space Entry Procedures (AISH 16). Monitor/Test the atmosphere
- ✓ Develop a timely evacuation, rescue or retrieval strategy of confined space entrants.

When you enter:

- ✓ Remember that our tasks can create new hazards. Which include but may not be limited to:
 - An oxygen deficient atmosphere
 - An explosive atmosphere
 - Engulfment hazard
- ✓ Monitor for oxygen, combustible/flammable atmospheres, and toxic hazards.
- ✓ Use LOTO to control potential energy sources, fall protection, retrieval systems.
- ✓ Use tools designed for confined space use, ventilation, air monitoring, lighting, and communication.

HEALTH OR SAFETY REMINDER:

Entrants must maintain communication with the trained attendant. The monitoring system must enable the attendant and or entry supervisor to order you to evacuate and to alert rescue personnel to rescue entrants if/when needed. Attendant cannot have any other duties.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. What three things must a space have to be considered a confined space?
2. If more than one crew is working in more than one location within the same confined space, are two or more monitors required?
3. Can our work create additional hazards?
4. True or False - Although I am not on the permit. I can just reach in. It doesn't count since I did not fully enter.
5. True or False - Monitoring/Testing should be done prior to ventilating the confined space.

Answers:

1. Large enough to enter, Limited access and egress, Not intended for continuous human occupancy
2. Yes, continual monitoring of each location in the confined space is required for all entrant work areas.
3. Yes, e.g. hot work can result in an oxygen deficient atmosphere, glue and primer can create a flammable atmosphere, etc.
4. False
5. True, it is important to know what current condition of the atmosphere is in, before you ventilate