The Ins-and-Out of Confined Space

Confined spaces present a variety of hazards that, when not properly handled, can lead to a serious injury or death. Examples include: storage tanks, compartments in ships, boilers, pits, silos, vats, degreasers, process vessels, reaction vessels, exhaust and ventilation ducts, sewers, tunnels, pipelines, and utility vaults.

A “Confined Space” refers to a location that:

- Is large enough to enter and work inside
- Limited means of entry and exit
- Not designed for worker occupancy

There are three basic types of confined spaces:

- Non-Permit Required
- Permit Required
- Alternate Entry

While entries can be done into most spaces, keep in mind that every entry must follow OSHA regulations.

**Permit-Required** confined spaces are more hazardous and have specific procedures you need to follow for entry. These spaces have the three characteristics listed above plus at least one of the following:

- The space has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere: think fuel storage or chemical storage.
- It contains materials that may engulf the entrant – grain silos and sewage wet wells are good examples.
- Inadequate ventilation that could produce or contain harmful air contaminant.
- The space is internally configured such that the entrant could become trapped by inwardly converging walls; or a floor that slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross section. Tapered bottom containers such as bottom dump rail cars or trucks fall into this category.
- Contains any other health and/or safety hazard.

**Alternate Entry** spaces are actually permit required spaces where the only hazard is atmospheric and the employer can show that it can be controlled with ventilation.

**Non-Permit Required** spaces meet only the three conditions listed at the top and none of the permit-required conditions. Non-Permit Required don’t require as much preparation and are considered less dangerous

...but don’t let that fool you. All confined spaces are dangerous!

**Key Safety Tips for Confined Spaces**

- Determine that any required confined space entry permits have been fully completed.
- When entering permit required spaces, review the permit, and ensure it’s safe to enter.
- Know who is going in and who’s staying out.
- Have a good rescue plan; train for it; and review the plan just prior to making any entry.
- Inspect and use your PPE!
SAFETY MEETING ATTENDANCE

CONFINED SPACES

Company: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Trained By: _________________________ Location: _________________________

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION TOPICS:

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________

ATENDEES:

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________

_________________________________