

SAFETY AWARENESS

Brief Topic Safety Refresher Training For Associates

2024

Confined Spaces – Identification

There are already plenty of hazards that you need to be aware of while working on a construction site, but confined spaces are particularly dangerous.

Accidents often occur in confined spaces because workers were unaware that they were in such an area to begin with. As such, the first step toward safety in and around confined spaces is to identify them.

Confined Space Characteristics

OSHA standards define confined spaces as meeting the three following criteria:

- The space is large enough for an employee to enter.
- The space has limited means of entry. This requirement is sometimes misunderstood as meaning that the space has only one entrance and exit, but it actually refers to the physical ease with which workers can get in and out. Needing a ladder or having to duck under a low doorway are examples of limited means of entry and exit.
- The space is not designed for continuous occupancy, such as due to a lack of ventilation, lighting or sufficient room to work and move around.

Common areas of a job site that may meet the requirements to be considered confined spaces include:

- Manholes
- Sewers
- Storm drains
- Water mains
- Lift stations
- Tanks
- Basements without steps
- Attics
- Vessels



Evaluating Confined Spaces on Job Sites

Job site areas that may meet the qualifications to be considered a confined space must be evaluated by a qualified person. That person should also inspect the space to determine whether it requires a permit.

It is important that due diligence is conducted for all spaces on a case-by-case basis. Some areas on a job site may seem similar, but even the slightest differences can mean very different levels of danger.

