

# Permit-Required Confined Spaces Standard

**(29 CFR 1910.146)**

Even though you may change a joint connection on a high pressurized water pipe once every few years, work in an excavation site for only a few hours, or clean out a boiler or furnace once a year, you can be at risk for injuries and/or illnesses such as death by suffocation, broken bones, or respiratory problems from breathing in toxic substances. An unexpected event could result in serious physical injury or death from performing tasks in certain types of confined spaces.

A confined space has limited access, exit, and entry. Sometimes there is little or no ventilation, and often flammable gases and combustible or hazardous dusts are present. Sometimes the space is small, making it difficult to move freely within the space. Confined spaces are usually not designed to work in them for an extended period of time.

Jobs that may require entry into a confined space include welding, sewer repairs, sewage treatment, highway, bridge and tunnel repairs, excavations, and boiler cleaning to name a few.

You should know that there is a law that protects you from the hazards associated with confined space work. The law is referred to as the Permit Required Confined Space Standard and is cited as OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146. It protects workers in general industry from the hazards of entry into permit-required confined spaces.

Your employer is required to identify hazards in confined spaces and to implement controls that will prevent injuries and deaths to workers. Permit-required means that a blank permit has to be completed before you enter a space. In preparing the permit, the employer must:

1. identify and evaluate permit space hazards before allowing worker entry.
2. test conditions in the permit space during entry operations and monitor the space prior to and during entry via atmospheric monitoring (oxygen, combustible gases or vapors, and toxic gases or vapors), testing, ventilation, and purging information.

3. provide personal protective equipment (PPE) - respirator, headgear, gloves, harness, and any other equipment necessary for safe entry, i.e., radio, personal monitors, etc.
4. ensure that at least one attendant or buddy is stationed outside the permit space for the duration of entry operations.
5. implement appropriate procedures for summoning rescue and emergency equipment.
6. review established entry operations and annually revise the permit-space entry program.
7. provide workers with information about potential exposures and hazard information through training.

Upon completion of the training, employers must ensure that employees have acquired the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary for the safe performance of their duties.

Additional training is required when:

- there is a new worker
- there is a change in permit space operations
- the job duties change in permit operations
- you have never received training

Training is also required for rescue team members. Upon completion of training, workers must receive a certificate of training that includes the worker's name, trainer's name, and dates of training. The certification must be made available for inspection by workers and their authorized representatives.

## Tips

- **limit your time in a confined space**
- **check air monitoring results frequently**
- **use your PPE**
- **always work with a "Buddy"**
- **familiarize yourself with your agency emergency rescue procedures**

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