

MIOSHA Fact Sheet



Confined Space in Construction

Fatalities and injuries frequently occur among construction workers who, during the course of their jobs, are required to enter confined spaces. In some circumstances, these workers are exposed to a variety of hazardous atmospheric factors and physical agents.

What is a Confined Space?

A “**confined space**,” as defined in Construction Standard [Part 35, Confined Space in Construction](#) means a space that, is large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter it; has limited or restricted means for entry and exit; and is not designed for continuous employee occupancy.

Below are some examples of confined spaces:

- Storage tanks or process vessels
- Bins or boilers
- Ventilation ducts
- Sewers or underground utility vaults
- Tunnels (after construction is completed)
- Pipelines
- New manholes and new sewer pipe (installed and / or stored on construction sites)
- Attics, crawl spaces and elevator pits
- Open top spaces such as tubs, vaults, and vessels

General Requirements

Before beginning work at a worksite, each employer must ensure that a competent person identifies all **confined spaces** in which one or more of the employees it directs may work. After the space is determined to be a confined space the employer must determine if there is a hazard present that could require it be treated as a **permit required confined space**. The employer then must identify each space that is a permit space, through consideration and evaluation of the elements of that space, including testing as necessary.

If the workplace contains one or more permit spaces, the employer who identifies, or who receives notice of, a permit space must:

- Inform exposed employees by posting danger signs or by any other equally effective means, of the existence and location of, and the danger posed by, each permit space; and
- Inform, in a timely manner, and in a manner other than posting, its employees' authorized representatives and the controlling contractor of the existence and location of, and the danger posed by, each permit space.

Before an employee enters the space, the internal atmosphere must be tested, with a calibrated direct-reading instrument, for oxygen content, for flammable gases and vapors, and for potential toxic air contaminants, in that order.

Before entry operations begin, the host employer must provide the following information, if it has it, to the controlling contractor:

- The location of each known permit space.
- The hazards or potential hazards in each space or the reason it is a permit space; and
- Any precautions that the host employer or any previous controlling contractor or entry employer implemented for the protection of employees in the permit space.

Permit Required Confined Space Program

Each entry employer must:

- Implement the measures necessary to prevent unauthorized entry.
- Identify and evaluate the hazards of permit spaces before employees enter them; and
- Develop and implement the means, procedures, and practices necessary for safe permit space entry operations.

LEO is an equal opportunity employer/program.



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Permitting Process

Before entry is authorized:

- Each entry employer must prepare an entry permit.
- The entry supervisor must sign the permit to authorize entry.
- The completed permit must be available to all entrants and posted at the entry portal so pre-entry preparations can be confirmed.
- The entry supervisor must terminate entry when the following occur:
 - Operations are completed.
 - Suspend or cancel operations when a condition that is not allowed arises.
 - Cancel the permit when a condition arises that is not covered under the permit and 1926.1205(e)(2).

Entry Permit

The entry permit must identify:

- The permit space to be entered.
- The purpose of the entry.
- The date and duration of the entry permit.
- The authorized entrants.
- Means of detecting atmospheric hazards.
- Names of person(s) currently as attendants.
- Name of entry supervisor.
- Hazards of the permit space to be entered.
- The measures to eliminate or control the hazards before entry.
- The acceptable entry conditions.
- Results of tests and monitoring.
- Communication to maintain contact with attendants and entrants.
- Equipment needed; personal protective equipment (PPE), testing, rescue, communications, alarm.
- Any other information necessary for employee safety.
- Additional permits, such as for hot work.

Training

The employer must provide training to each employee whose work is regulated by this standard.

The training must:

- Be in a language they understand.
- Before assigned any duties under this standard.
- When there is a change in duties.

- When there is a change in permit space operations that the employee has not been trained on.
- Inadequacies in employees.
- Knowledge or use of procedures.
- The employer must maintain training records with employee names, dates, trainer names and be available for employees to see.

Rescue and Emergency Services

An employer who designates rescue and emergency services must:

- Evaluate the rescuer's ability to respond in a timely manner.
- Evaluate the rescuer's ability to use rescue equipment appropriately.
- Select a rescue team or service that has the capability to reach victim(s) within the appropriate time frame, is equipped for and proficient in the rescue services, agrees to notify the employer immediately if rescue services become unavailable, inform rescue team of the hazards they may encounter and provides access to all permit spaces.
- An employer whose employees are designated rescuers must provide all equipment and training at no cost to the employees.
- Provide all PPE and train on its proper use.
- Train on proper rescue duties and ensure they are proficient in all their duties.
- Provided cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid training.
- Ensure rescuers practice making rescues before attempting actual rescues.
- Retrieval equipment must be available and employees trained in its use.

MIOSHA Construction Standard [Part 7, Welding and Cutting](#) Rule 408.40713 has rules for working in confined spaces.

How can I get more information?

For additional information, please contact the Construction Safety and Health Division at 517-284-7680, or the Consultation Education and Training Division at 517-284-7720. MIOSHA Standards can be viewed on the MIOSHA website at www.michigan.gov/mioshastandards.