

PART 15

Confined Spaces

Previous Regulation(s): New – Previously requirements were contained in the “Confined Spaces Guideline”

Summary of requirements:

- **Confined space** – means an enclosed or partially enclosed space that except for the purpose of performing work, is not primarily designed or intended for human occupancy and has restricted means of access or egress.
- **Safe Work Procedures** must be developed, implemented and workers trained. The Safe Work Procedures must include:
 - Procedure for recognizing the risks.
 - Procedure for isolating – including blanking, disconnecting, interrupting and locking out – of pipes, lines, and sources of energy.
 - Safety and personal protective equipment to be used.
 - Procedures for communicating with a standby worker.
 - An emergency response plan and rescue procedures to be implemented in the event of an accident or other emergency, and
 - Information about the entry permit system.
- **General requirements:**
 - Identify and assess the hazards a worker is likely to be exposed to.
 - Identify and take measures to reduce, control or eliminate the risks.
 - Identify the appropriate type and frequency of tests and inspections necessary to determine the likelihood of a worker being exposed to any of the identified hazards.
 - Identify the safety and personal protective equipment required.
 - Identify emergency and personal protective equipment required by a worker who undertakes rescue operations.
 - Establish and implement an entry permit system.
- **Entry permit system** containing the following information must be completed and signed by a competent person:
 - The location of the confined space;
 - The name of each worker who will enter the confined space and the reason for their entry;
 - The date and time during which the permit is valid;
 - Specify the work being done in the confined space, the safe work procedures for entering, being in and leaving a confined space and all hazards identified by the risk assessment. A copy of the completed and signed entry permit must be readily available at the site of the confined space.

- **Review of entry permit required** when a work activity in a confined space changes; the circumstances at the workplace or in a confined space change in a way that poses a risk to the safety or health of a worker; any of the workers or information listed in the permit changes.
- **No unauthorized entry** – all reasonable steps must be taken to prevent any other person from entering a confined space.
- **Requirements before confined space is entered:**
 - **Worker entering the space wears a full-body harness** attached to a lifeline that is attached to a personal hoisting device – unless an alternate safe method of access and egress is provided.
 - **Take measures to ensure workers will not be exposed to the risk of drowning or becoming engulfed or entrapped in any liquid or free-flowing solid;**
 - **All energy sources that may present a hazard must be locked out** and the energy sources have been put in a zero energy state.
 - **Designate a standby worker for every confined space** – the standby worker to remain present at the entrance of the confined space at all times while a worker is in the space if the risk assessment has identified that the space is or may become hazardous.
 - **Designated standby worker must be:** qualified as a first aider 1, 2 or 3; trained in confined space work and emergency and rescue procedures; in direct communication with the worker in the space, have suitable system to summon assistance if necessary; and the worker in the confined space is able to directly communicate with the standby worker.
 - **Traffic hazards** – appropriate barricades and warning signs must be provided to keep vehicles and pedestrian traffic away.
 - **Purging and ventilating unsafe atmosphere** before a worker is required or permitted to enter a confined space.
 - **Entry prohibited** – if the oxygen content level in the space is above 23% or if a concentration of a flammable or explosive substance cannot be reduced to less than 10% of its lower explosive limit (exception for fire fighters).
 - **Emergency response** – personal protective and emergency equipment must be readily available at the site.
 - **Emergency response – top entry** – rescue personnel must use a full body harness and are attached to a lifeline. If this would create an additional hazard or would not be reasonably practicable, an employer must ensure that an alternate method of rescue is available to immediately remove a worker from a space into which entry is from the top.

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**Note: This is high-level summary.
Please refer to the Regulation for more detailed requirements.**