

Program Profile Series

Number Fifteen



CONFINED SPACE PROGRAM

SCOPE - No employee shall be required to enter a confined space unless a written confined space entry procedure is developed to ensure the employee's safety.

AUTHORITY/REFERENCE - OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146
Ohio Administrative Code 4123:1-5-22
NIOSH Publication no. 80-106
AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARDS INSTITUTE
Z117.1



ACCOUNTABILITY - Based on the permit entry standard and other recognized safety and health standards, entry into any confined space requires prior testing, evaluating and monitoring as a requisite to issuing an entry permit. Every confined space should be treated as if it were immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH).

PROGRAM ELEMENTS - These are the elements the employer's program must contain:

1. Measures necessary to prevent unauthorized entry.
2. Means to identify and evaluate the hazards of permit spaces before permitting entry.
3. Procedures and practices necessary for safe entry and operations.
4. Provision and maintenance of appropriate equipment at no cost to the employee to allow safe entry, including: testing and monitoring, ventilation, communications, personal protection, lighting, barriers and shields, ladders, rescue and emergencies, and other equipment deemed necessary for safe entry.

5. Evaluation procedures for permit-required space conditions before entry, monitoring procedures for confined space conditions during entry operation, and requirements for testing for oxygen first, then for combustible gases or vapors, and then for toxic gases or vapors.

6. At least one attendant must be stationed outside the space during the entire entry operation.

7. If multiple spaces are to be monitored by one attendant, include procedures in the program to enable the attendant to respond without distracting from the attendant's responsibilities for the other space(s).

8. Designate by category employees who will have active roles in entry operation: authorized entrants, attendants, entry supervisors, or persons who test/monitor space atmospheres. Identify the duties of each category and provide the prescribed training.

9. Procedures for summoning rescue and emergency services, for rescuing entrants, for providing emergency services to rescued entrants, for preventing unauthorized persons from providing emergency services.

10. A permit system, including provision for preparation, issuance, use and cancellation of permits.

11. Procedure to coordinate entry operations when employees of more than one employer are working together.

12. Procedures for concluding or securing (including permit cancellation) of entry operations.

13. Procedures for entry operation review and for program revision to correct deficiencies before subsequent entries are permitted.

14. Program review after one year to evaluate program compliance and effectiveness, and revision of the program as deemed appropriate to ensure the safety of entrants and operations.

PERMIT SYSTEM - Before entry is authorized, employers must implement a written entry permit system. Entry supervisors must sign the permit and the completed permit must be available to all authorized entrants. Authorization for entry operations must not exceed the time required to complete the job. The entry supervisor shall terminate operations at completion or when conditions in the space change to those not authorized on the permit. The employer shall retain each permit for at least one year.

CROSS REFERENCING - Other programs which may be involved in the development of this program might include Respiratory Protection, Hazard Communication, Lockout/Tagout, Hot Work Permitting, First Aid Training and an Emergency Action Plan.

RESPONSIBILITY - Who is going to see that the program is developed and implemented including creating and conducting the training?

Operational problems encountered during entry must be noted on the permit.

TRAINING - The employer shall provide training so that all affected employees acquire the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary to perform their assigned duties. The training shall establish employee proficiency in their assigned duties. The employer shall certify that the required training has been done through a certification that contains the employee's name, signatures of the trainers and the dates of the training.

DEFINITIONS Confined Space - A space that is large enough that an employee can bodily enter and perform work which has limited or restricted means for entry or exit and is not designed for continuous human occupancy. Confined spaces include, but are not limited to, storage tanks, compartments of ships, process vessels, reaction vessels, pits, silos, vats, degreasers, boilers, tunnels, pipelines and underground utility vaults.

Permit Entry Confined Space - A confined space which has one or more of the following characteristics: it has a hazardous atmosphere or the potential for a hazardous atmosphere, it has a potential engulfment hazard, it is designed with sloping walls or floor, or it contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazard.