

# 7 CONFINED SPACE ENTRY DO'S & DON'TS

## DON'T

enter a confined space unless you've been trained.

## DON'T

enter a permit-required confined space without an entry permit.

## DON'T

rush into a confined space to rescue a co-worker unless you're trained and authorized to carry out rescue operations—remember that many confined space fatalities are suffered by rescue workers.

## DO

read and understand the entry procedure and know all hazards/potential hazards before entry.

## DO

make sure there's at least one attendant outside the space and a means for constant communication is in place.

## DO

make sure your communication and emergency rescue equipment are on hand and working properly before entry.

## DO

have the right respiratory protective equipment and other PPE on prior to entry.

## The Entry Permit

The confined space entry permit is the most essential tool for assuring safety during entry in confined spaces.

The entry permit process guides the supervisor and workers through a systematic evaluation of the space to be entered. The permit is used to establish appropriate conditions. Before each entry into a confined space, an entry permit will be completed.

The entry supervisor will then communicate the contents of the permit to all employees involved in the operation and post the permit conspicuously near the confined space entry point.

## Elements of Entry Permits

A standard entry permit shall contain the following items:

- Name of confined space,
- Purpose of entry,
- Date and authorized duration of the entry permit,
- Name of authorized entrants within the permit space,
- Names of Entrants, Attendants, Entry Supervisor,
- Hazards of the permit space to be entered,
- Measures used to isolate the permit space and to, eliminate or control permit space hazards,
- What are the acceptable entry conditions,
- Results of initial and periodic tests performed

## Confined Spaces Are Dangerous Places



**Never Go In Without A Permit**

Rescue and emergency services that can be summoned, and the means of contacting those services (i.e., equipment to use, phone numbers to call)

Communication procedures used by authorized entrants and Attendant(s) to maintain contact during the entry

Equipment to be provided for

compliance with this Confined Space Program (i.e., PPE, testing, communications, alarm systems, and rescue)

Other information necessary for the circumstances of the particular confined space that will help ensure employee safety

Additional permits, such as for hot work, that has been issued to authorize work on the permit space

### Permit Scope & Duration

A permit is only valid for one shift. For a permit to be renewed, the following conditions shall be met before each reentry into the confined space:

1. Atmospheric testing shall be conducted, and the results should be within acceptable limits. If atmospheric test results are not within acceptable limits, precautions to protect entrants against the hazards should be addressed on the permit and should be in place.
2. Verify that all precautions and other measures called for on the permit are still in effect.
3. Only operations or work originally approved on the permit shall be conducted in the confined space.

A new permit is needed whenever changing work conditions or work activities introduce new hazards into the confined space. Canceled entry permit for at least one (1) year. Any problems encountered during an entry operation shall be noted on the respective permit.

Prospect Valley Dairy Confined Space Fatalities  
Date: August 20, 2024  
Location: Weld County (near Keenesburg), Colorado

At a dairy facility in Colorado, multiple individuals entered a confined space where hydrogen sulfide gas was present. Public reports indicate the individuals were members of the same family. When one person collapsed inside the space, others entered in an attempt to help. Six people died from toxic gas exposure. OSHA is investigating the incident.

This incident highlights the emotional reality of confined space emergencies. When someone collapses, (especially a family member) instinct, urgency, and emotion take over. In those moments, people act to help without stopping to evaluate hazards. This is how confined space incidents escalate into multiple fatalities.

The entry permit exists to remove emotion from the decision-making process. A permit forces hazard evaluation, role assignment, atmospheric testing, and rescue planning before anyone enters. It establishes who may enter, who must stay out, and how emergencies are handled—even when emotions are high.

The permit exists to protect us when emotion overrides judgment. We know the statistics. We know the risks. The permit ensures we act on that knowledge even in the hardest moments.