

## S5 – Toolbox Talk

### Confined Spaces

---

Some obvious examples of confined spaces include bins, hoppers, chutes, silos and tanks. Other less obvious examples are open-topped chambers, combustion chambers, ductwork and unventilated or poorly ventilated rooms.

Access to any confined space is only permitted under strictly controlled conditions, and each occasion when entry is required is subject to a specific risk assessment, a safe system of work, and controlled by a permit to work.

The hazards which can be present in a confined space are many and depend largely on the type of enclosure, its position and its normal use. The following list of hazards and rules is not exhaustive, and a specific risk assessment will identify any other potential hazards not featured.

- Lack of oxygen
- Poisonous gas, fume or vapour
- Liquids and solids which can suddenly fill the space when disturbed
- Free-flowing solids which 'bridge' then collapse unexpectedly
- Fire and explosions (eg flammable vapours, excess oxygen, etc)
- Residues which give off gas, vapour or fume
- Dust in high concentrations
- Hot conditions leading to increase in body temperature
- Increase in danger from the work being performed, ie using a portable grinder (dust or electric shock) or gas, fume or vapour from cutting/welding or using volatile/flammable solvents, adhesives etc
- Wherever possible, avoid entry to the confined space, ie by doing the work from the outside
- A supervisor will be appointed with the responsibility of ensuring that the necessary precautions are taken and to check safety at each stage
- Only persons who are trained and have sufficient experience of the work to be carried out are allowed in confined spaces
- Only persons with appropriate levels of fitness to wear breathing apparatus are allowed in confined spaces. Medical advice regarding an individual's suitability may be required
- An oxygen level check must be carried out prior to entering any confined space
- Drinking, eating and smoking are prohibited
- Only approved electrical equipment should be used if flammable gases are present



- Arrangements must be in place to cover any emergency situation which could arise. These include the provision of harnesses with lifelines running back to a point outside the confined space, and an adequate method of communication between people inside the confined space and those outside
- The emergency procedures should include an effective method of contacting the emergency services, and what relevant information should be made available to them on arrival
- A rescue attempt should not be made until the alarm has been raised and breathing apparatus has been put on.

**Note:** A rescue attempt is not recommended unless persons have been suitably trained.

- The first duty of any rescuer is to ensure his/her own safety.

---

### Training register

Date .....

Name of attendee

Signature

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

