



SITE SAFETY MEETING - TOOL BOX TALK

CONFINED SPACES

Many workers and would-be rescuers are injured and killed each year while working in confined spaces. These accidents occur when workers fail to recognize that a confined space is a potential life-threatening hazard.

A confined space:

- ☛ Is large enough for a person to enter fully, to perform assigned work.
- ☛ Is not designed or intended for continuous occupancy.
- ☛ Has a limited or restricted means of entry / exit.

A permit-required confined space has one or more of the following characteristics:

- ☛ Contains (or has the potential to contain) a hazardous atmosphere.
- ☛ Might cause an entrant to be trapped or asphyxiated.
- ☛ Contains a material with the potential to engulf someone that enters the space.
- ☛ Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazards.

Confined spaces are found in many workplaces. They can be above or below ground. Examples that may be encountered by construction workers include tanks, sewers, pipes, pits, manholes, tunnels, underground vaults, and any other area with limited access and limited ventilation. Under certain conditions, ditches and trenches may also be a confined space.

Potential hazards inside confined spaces include, but are not limited to:

- ☛ Asphyxiation (due to lack of oxygen)
- ☛ Fire and explosion
- ☛ Exposure to toxic materials/poisonous gases
- ☛ Mechanical hazards

Follow all applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and a few general safety procedures are shown below:

- ☛ When the work performed requires it, develop and implement a written Confined Space Entry Program.
- ☛ Complete as much work as possible outside the confined space.
- ☛ Never enter a confined space without required approval.
- ☛ Test for the presence of toxic gases before starting work and throughout the duration of the job. If the atmosphere is hazardous, an approved respirator must be worn.
- ☛ Test the atmosphere for oxygen deficiency. Open all access doors and, if necessary, provide mechanical ventilation.
- ☛ Use explosion-proof equipment, when needed.
- ☛ Disconnect, tag out, and lock out power-driven internal equipment inside confined spaces – before entry.
- ☛ Pipelines must be valved off, tagged, and capped before workers enter a vessel or other confined space.
- ☛ When required, wear a safety harness with a lifeline and have standby rescue personnel available outside the confined space. Do not permit rescue personnel to enter the confined space.
- ☛ Before re-entering a confined space, check conditions again and follow all required safety procedures.

Questions to start discussion

1. What is the definition of a confined space?
2. What are the characteristics of a confined space that would REQUIRE A PERMIT?
3. What are some above ground confined spaces that could be found on the job sites?
4. What are some below ground confined spaces that could be found on the job sites?
5. What are some of the hazards found in a confined space?
6. In accordance with the applicable OSHA regulations, what are some of the general safety procedures before entering or working in a confined space?

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Meeting Notes:

Employee Comments / Concerns: _____

Other Safety issues to be addressed on the job: _____

Training Record: Date: _____ Jobsite: _____ By: _____ Title: _____

Employee Name	Emp #	Signature	Employee Name	Emp #	Signature
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Tool Box Talks are employee safety meetings designed to serve as 15 minute on-site training sessions focused on key topics relative to your work.

Site superintendents or foremen are responsible for holding meetings each week usually during a morning break. This important segment of your general safety program encourages open discussion on the topic of the week and allows employees to share their experiences about accidents and safe or unsafe work practices. Recordkeeping is mandatory and all involved must sign off on each session.

Topics for your company could include: electrical safety, excavation and trenching safety, fall protection, scaffold safety, stairway and ladder safety, hazard communication, fire safety, personal protective equipment, tool safety, materials handling, etc.

Sample Tool Box Talks are provided compliments of the Safety Committee of the Hartford County Homebuilders Association. For more information on Tool Box Talks contact The HBA office 860 563-4212. *Tool Box Safety Talks* can be purchased from the National Association of Homebuilders 1-800 368-5242, www.nahb.com or may be available through your business insurance provider.

BUILD SAFELY – THINK SAFETY