



# LOSS PREVENTION Quick Takes

## Confined Spaces

A confined space is defined as any location that is large enough that an employee can bodily enter and perform work; has limited openings for entry and egress; and is not intended for continuous employee occupancy. Examples of confined spaces include manholes, lift stations, pipes, storage tanks, trailers, tank cars, pits, sumps, hoppers, and bins. Entry into confined spaces without proper precautions could result in injury, impairment, or death due to:

- An atmosphere that is flammable or explosive.
- Lack of sufficient oxygen to support life
- Contact with or inhalation of toxic materials
- General safety or work area hazards such as steam or high-pressure materials.

### Assignment of Responsibility

Employer	Program Manager	Entry Supervisor	Entrants/Affected Employees	Attendant
Administer the Confined Space Program.	Responsible for managing the Confined Space program.	Authorized and qualified to approve confined space entry permits.	Employees who are granted permission to enter a confined space.	Shall be stationed outside of the confined workspace.

**Training:** The employer should provide training so that all employees acquire the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary for the safe performance of their duties in confined spaces.

All employees who will enter confined spaces should be trained in entry procedures. Personnel responsible for supervising, planning, entering, or participating in the confined space entry should be adequately trained in their functional duties prior to any confined space entry. The employer should have a written plan of action that (internally or externally) has provisions for conducting a timely rescue of individuals within a confined space, should an emergency arise.

Training for atmospheric monitoring personnel should include proper use of monitoring instruments, including instruction on the following:

- Proper use of the equipment
- Calibration of equipment.
- Sampling strategies and techniques
- Exposure limits (PELs, TLVs, LELs, UELs, etc.).

**Pre-Entry Hazard Assessment:** A hazard assessment should be completed by the Supervisor prior to any entry into a confined space. No entry should be permitted until the hazard assessment has been reviewed and discussed by all persons engaged in the activity.

**Hazard Controls:** Employers should be able to either control the health hazards by eliminating the responsible agents, reduce health hazards below harmful levels, or prevent the contaminants from coming into contact with the workers.

**Atmospheric Test:** Data should be gathered prior to entry into a confined space. Atmospheric testing is recommended for two distinct purposes: (1) evaluation of the hazards of the permit space, and (2) verification that acceptable conditions exist for entry into that space.

**Ingress/Egress Safeguards:** Means for safe entry and exit should be provided for confined spaces. Each entry and exit points should be evaluated by the Entry Supervisor to determine the most effective methods and equipment that will enable employees to safely enter, perform work and exit the confined space.

**Warning Signs and Symbols:** If the workplace contains permit required spaces, the employer should inform exposed employees by posting danger signs or by any other equally effective means of the existence and location of and the danger posed by the permit required spaces.

*For complete details of a Confined Space Entry Program, refer to the Risk Pool's Sample Safety Program (Confined Space Entry Program) available at: <https://www.tmlirp.org/risk-management/risk-resource-library/>*