



Confined Space Entry: Permit Required



OSHA's Definition

All employees should be aware of OSHA's definition of **confined spaces** and **permit-required confined spaces**. According to OSHA:

"Many workplaces contain spaces that are considered to be "confined" because their configurations hinder the activities of any employees who must enter into, work in, and exit from them. In many instances, employees who work in confined spaces also face increased risk of exposure to serious physical injury from hazards such as entrapment, engulfment, and hazardous atmospheric conditions. Confinement itself may pose entrapment hazards, and work in confined spaces may keep employees closer to hazards, such as an asphyxiating atmosphere, than they would be otherwise. For example, confinement, limited access, and restricted airflow can result in hazardous conditions that would not arise in an open workplace."

The term "permit-required confined space" refers to those spaces that meet the definition of a "confined space" and may pose health or safety hazards, thereby requiring a permit for entry.

A confined space:

- Has limited or restricted means of entry or exit
- Is large enough for an employee to enter and perform assigned work, **and**
- Is not designed for continuous occupancy by the employee.

These spaces may include, but are not limited to, underground vaults, tanks, manholes, boilers, sewers, pits, tunnels, ducts...

A permit-required confined space is one that **meets the definition of a confined space** and has **one or more** of these characteristics:

1. Contains or has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere,
2. Contains a material that has the potential for engulfing the entrant,

3. Has an internal configuration that might cause an entrant to be trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor that slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross section, and/or
4. Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazards."

A Non-Permit Confined Space is a space that meets the definition of a confined space, but does not contain or, with respect to atmospheric hazards, have the potential to contain any hazard capable of causing death or serious physical harm.

As a general rule, the University does not intend to have its employees enter permit required confined spaces and every effort will be made to eliminate the hazards and declassify the space accordingly.

An **Entrant** is an employee who will physically enter the confined space to perform the work.

An **Attendant** is an employee who remains outside the confined space and monitors the entrant(s); guards the space against unauthorized entry, warns the entrants of any unusual conditions; and summons rescue personnel if needed.

All employees involved in confined space work must receive training.

Before entering a confined space:

1. **Evaluate the space for hazards.**
2. **Prepare the space for entry.**
 - a. **Isolate Space**
 - b. **Ventilate the space**
 - c. **Conduct atmospheric monitoring(O₂ >19.5% & <23.5%, LEL<10%)**
 - d. **Complete the Confined space Pre-Entry Checklist**
3. **Can the hazards be eliminated from outside the space or maintained in a safe condition by continuous forced ventilation?**
4. **If so, declassify to a non-permit required confined space by completing the Pre-entry Checklist.**
5. **If not, entry must be with permit required confined space entry procedures after proper completion of the Permit.
Enter the space with; entrant (wearing retrieval harness & lifeline), attendant, mechanical retrieval device, required PPE, ventilation...**

The Checklist / Permit must be posted at the entrance to the confined space and be available for review by all entrants.

If non-permit space conditions change during the job, the space shall be immediately evacuated and the space shall be re-evaluated by the supervisor.

After the completion of the job, the checklist/permit must be sent to the EH&S Department. If there are any questions about any aspect of a confined space

entry please contact the Environmental Health and Safety Department at 4-9505 before proceeding.

Additional information regarding Pitt's policies and procedures for working in permit-required confined spaces may be found in our [Confined Space Program](#) available on the EH&S Department website.