

Confined spaces: recognize before entering

Talk 12 of 52 | Week 12 | High-risk areas

Leader: adapt this talk to today's electrical work and site procedures. See the educational-use and liability notice on page 2.

START THE CONVERSATION

A vault, tank, or similar space can have hazards that are not visible from its entrance. A space that fits a person may still have limited access and may not be designed for occupancy.

KEY TALKING POINTS

1. Have the space evaluated through the employer's confined-space process. Do not decide that entry is safe based on smell, appearance, or a previous visit.
2. Where permit-space requirements apply, follow the entry program, authorization, atmospheric testing, isolation, communication, and attendant arrangements.
3. Only trained and authorized personnel enter under the applicable procedures. Coordinate with other employers whose work could affect conditions.
4. A rescue attempt can create more victims. Alert the planned rescue service; do not enter to help unless specifically trained, equipped, and authorized under the rescue plan.
5. Electrical job example: a cable route enters a below-grade vault with a small access opening. Before anyone climbs in to measure or retrieve a tool, confirm the space evaluation and entry controls. A brief task still involves entry; calling it a quick look does not remove the hazards.
6. Coordinate electrical isolation and other work that could affect the space through the designated entry process. Identify the entry supervisor and how information is shared between the host and contractors. A change in adjacent work, equipment operation, or conditions must be reported through that process before continuing.
7. Practice the communication plan from outside the space. Ask who initiates the emergency response and how the rescue service reaches the location. An unplanned entry to help a coworker can expose another person. Keep the discussion focused on recognizing the boundary and following the established entry and rescue arrangements.

ASK THE CREW

1. Are there confined spaces in our work area?
2. How are unauthorized entry and emergency response controlled?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

Identify any spaces on today's route and confirm their status with the responsible supervisor.

OSHA SOURCES / FURTHER READING

OSHA: Confined spaces in construction

OSHA: Construction confined-space FAQ

Attendance & action record

Confined spaces: recognize before entering

Date: _____ Leader: _____

Company / jobsite: _____

Site hazards and controls discussed:

Follow-up action / responsible person / due date:

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Participant name	Signature / acknowledgment

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