

Confined Spaces in Construction: Entry & Exit

5-Minute Talk

Overview

Proper preparation can make the most difficult permit space entry safe, while not being prepared can make even the most routine entry a safety hazard. One tool for making this task easier is the use of entry/exit checklists. Some things that might be on your pre-entry checklist include:

- **Training**—All employees involved in the permit space entry must be trained as to: (1) the nature of the hazards involved, (2) in the necessary precautions to be taken, and (3) in the use of protective and emergency equipment.
- **Specific duty training**—In addition to Authorized Entrants, attendants and entry supervisors must receive specific training to perform their duties.
- **Identify potential hazards**—All existing or potential hazards must be identified for a particular space. These hazards must be controlled or eliminated. Some hazard examples include engulfment, presence of toxic gases and/or flammable gases, oxygen deficiency, or stored mechanical or electrical energy.
- **Survey surrounding area**—Survey and secure the surrounding area so that unauthorized personnel do not enter permit spaces.
- **Obtain entry permit**—The permit authorizes work in the confined space for the duration of the specific job. It also identifies authorized entrants, attendant, and supervisor.
- **Test the atmosphere**—Evaluate the atmospheric hazards of the space and verify that acceptable entry conditions for entry exist. Use direct-reading instruments to read oxygen content, flammable gases and vapors, and potential toxic air contaminants, in that order.
- **PPE Check**—Final check of entrants' PPE preparations.
- **Entry**—If there are no physical hazards, and if the pre-entry tests show there is no dangerous air contamination and/or oxygen deficiency, and there is no reason to believe that any is likely to develop, entry into the space and work within it may proceed. Periodically test air as necessary.



The checklist may also include information on how the exit was executed, and the duties required in each type of exit.

- **Normal end of job exit**—Includes securing and putting up signs prohibiting unauthorized entry.
- **Emergency exit**—Happens when an order to evacuate is given by the attendant or the entry supervisor, the entrant recognizes any warning sign or symptom of exposure to a dangerous situation, the entrant detects a prohibited condition, or an evacuation alarm is sounded.
- **Rescue**—Procedures for summoning rescue and emergency services, rescuing entrants from confined spaces, providing necessary emergency services to rescued employees, and preventing unauthorized personnel from attempting a rescue.

Employee Training

All employees must be trained in accordance with §1926.1207 Training

Training Tips

Using the employee handout, review with the employees the requirements for entering and leaving permit spaces as part of a comprehensive permit space training program.

Provide copies of the company's entry/exit checklist to the employees. Explain all of the items, and answer any questions the employees might have.

Explain the roles of attendants and entry supervisors in the entry and exit process.

Explain the role of rescue and emergency services providers. Demonstrate how to summon rescue and emergency personnel.

Discuss the dangers involved in trying to rescue entrants prior to the arrival of rescue personnel, and why attendants must not attempt rescue unless properly trained and relieved.

Where To Go For More Information

Your company's written permit-required confined space program.

§1926.1200 - §1926.1213 - Subpart AA—Confined Spaces in Construction.

