

CONFINED SPACE

Facts:

Each year in Australia, people are killed in a wide range of confined spaces, from storage vessels, to complex industrial equipment. Many of these fatalities occur when attempting to rescue another person in a confined space. Additionally, people can be seriously injured from other hazards found within confined spaces.



Legislation:

WH&S Regulation 2008, Part 18 s248/249/250.

General Safety Tips

- managers/supervisors should always conduct a risk assessment to identify and control any hazards associated with entering a confined space in the particular situation. **(use Risk Matrix Tool below)**
- all applicable workers should be trained in confined space entry

		Consequence				
		Insignificant No Injury 0-\$5K	Minor First Aid \$5K-\$50K	Moderate Med Treatment \$50K-\$100K	Major Serious Injuries \$100K-\$250K	Catastrophic Death More than \$250K
2. Enter Probability	Almost Certain	M	H	E	E	E
	Likely	M	H	H	E	E
	Possible	L	M	H	H	H
	Unlikely	L	L	M	M	M
	Rare	L	L	L	L	L
	Recommended Action Guide					
E=Extreme Risk – Task MUST NOT proceed						
H=High Risk – Special Procedures Required (See USQSafe)						
M=Moderate Risk – Work Method Statement Required						
L=Low Risk – Use Routine Procedures						

1. Enter Consequence

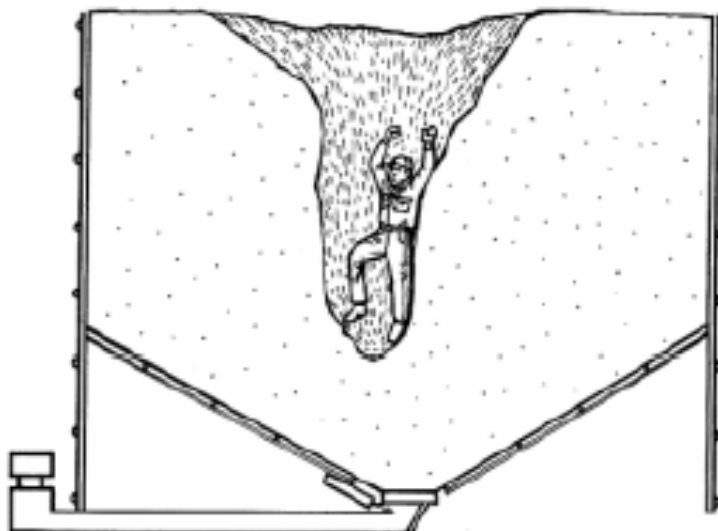
2. Enter Probability

3. Find Action

What is a Confined Space?

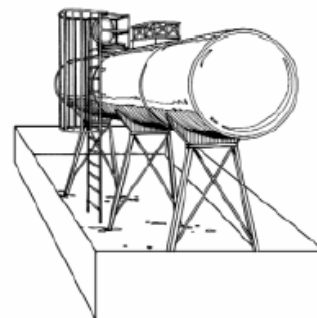
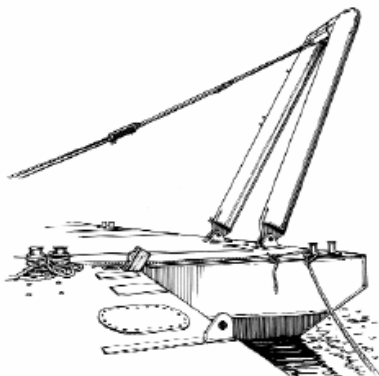
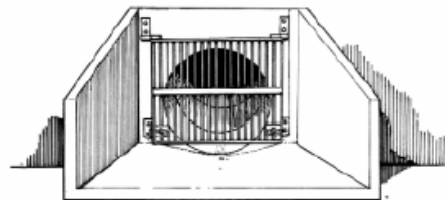
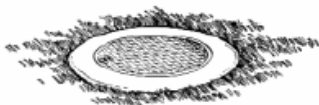
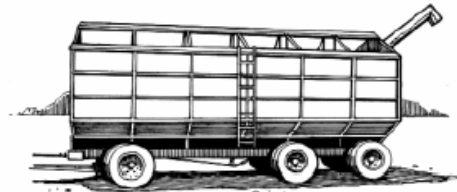
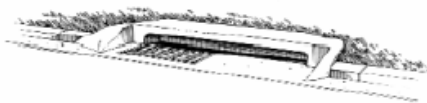
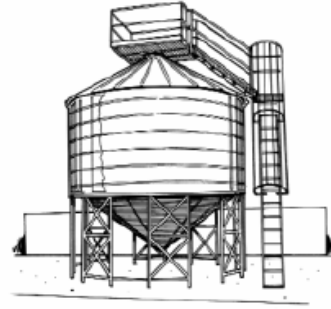
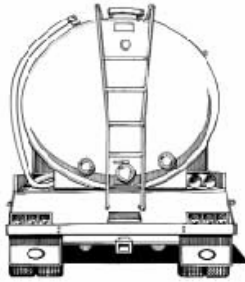
A 'confined space' means an enclosed or partially enclosed space that:

- is at atmospheric pressure when anyone is in the space; **and**
- is not intended or designed primarily as a workplace; **and**
- could have restricted entry to, or exit from, the place; **and**
- is, or is likely to be entered by a person to work; **and**
- at any time, contains, or is likely to contain, **any of the following** –
 - an atmosphere that has potentially harmful levels of a contaminant;
 - an atmosphere that does not have a safe oxygen level;
 - anything that could cause engulfment.



Examples of confined spaces include:

- Storage tanks, tank cars, process vessels, pressure vessels, boilers, silos and other tank-like compartments;
- Pits and degreasers; pipes, sewers, sewer pump stations including wet and dry wells, shafts and ducts; and
- Shipboard spaces entered through small hatchways or access points, cargo tanks, cellular double bottom tanks, duct keels, ballast or oil tanks and void spaces.
- Stormwater drains, sewers, pits, tunnels, and similar structures.



What are the health hazards in a confined space?

- **Oxygen Deficiency** – When the level of oxygen is low, life is threatened.
- **Toxic Gases** - These can cause poisoning or suffocation.
- **Explosion or Fire** – A build up of flammable gasses or vapours can cause explosion.

ALL OF THESE CAN RESULT IN DEATH!

When is a Confined Space a risk?

Danger is always present during routine tasks such as maintenance, inspections, repairs and cleaning.

Risk assessment

Before entering or working in a confined space, a risk assessment must be conducted to identify potential hazards and risks.

Always conduct a risk assessment before any controls are implemented and a risk assessment after the controls are implemented to ensure the risk has been reduced.

Where generic type work is carried out in confined spaces (maintenance) a generic risk assessment may be used for several confined spaces, however these risk assessments must be on the job and discussed by staff before entry to a confined space.

Take into consideration:

- Oxygen levels
- Toxic gasses
- Explosive gases
- Falling objects
- Flooding
- Heat
- Isolation of electrical and mechanical services
- Emergency and rescue arrangements

How do I work in a confined space safely?

- **NEVER** enter a confined space unless you are trained, have been deemed competent, and are authorised to do so;
- Ask your Supervisor for an “Entry Permit”, before entering a confined space;
- Conduct a Risk Assessment before entering the confined space;
- Test the atmosphere every time before you enter;
- Always monitor the atmosphere while working in the space;
- Always ensure adequate ventilation while working in the space;
- Make sure that the electrical services are isolated. Whoever enters the confined space must check to ensure that it is isolated;
- Always wear a safety harness and life line while working in the confined space;
- Make sure another suitable qualified person is present in close proximity to the entrance of the confined space acting as an observer and standby rescue person;
- Sign the Entry Permit;
- **NEVER** smoke in a confined space;
- If you are required to wear a breathing apparatus, **NEVER** remove it in the confined space;
- Always wear the Personal Protective Equipment provided;
- If an alarm is activated, get out immediately;
- Re-test the atmosphere before entering;
- On completion of work, always restore the confined space to normal; and
- Maintain all confined space equipment and record it in a log book.

Make Sure You Always Complete the Entry Permit



If an emergency happens, what do I do?

- Call for help immediately;
- Attempt to retrieve the person **WITHOUT** entering the confined space;
- **NEVER** enter the confined space to rescue a collapsed worker without training and breathing apparatus;
- Once the person has been retrieved, commence resuscitation if necessary;
- Get medical assistance if possible;
- Isolate the area; and
- Notify your Supervisor and WHSO immediately.

MOST IMPORTANT!

If you are working in a confined space and you feel dizzy, light headed or the gas detector has gone into alarm:

LEAVE THE SPACE IMMEDIATELY!

If you have any suggestion to control the risk, notify your Supervisor and / or USQSafe.

Record of Training

I have read and understand the information provided to me for Confined Space and I have been issued with:



Tea Break Talk paper – Confined Space

Employee's Name (PRINT)

Employee's Signature

____/____/____
Date

Trainer's Name (PRINT)

Trainer's Signature

____/____/____
Date

Document Procedure:

Original - to be kept on the employee's record of training

Copy – forward to USQSafe for archive filing

Electronic – USQSafe to record on PeopleSoft