

TITLE: 4613 CONFINED SPACES AND THE ENTRY PERMIT SYSTEM

LENGTH: 8 MINUTES

PRODUCTION YEAR: 2006

PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:

Employees must sometimes work in areas which have configurations that don't allow for regular safety precautions. In these spaces employees may be forced to work very close to hazards. Proper guarding may not exist to prevent falls and the air may be toxic or explosive. In addition, such an area may not have an easy way to exit should an emergency arise. These types of work areas are called confined spaces and learning how to safely work in these spaces is the purpose of this program.

Topics of the video include the definition of a confined space, the written confined space entry program, the difference between permit and non-permit required spaces and the entry permit system. Also covered are the responsibilities of each of the confined space entry team members: the entry supervisor, the standby attendant and the entrants.

SHOOTING LOCATION: A variety of industrial environments with tanks, silos, pits, vessels and other confined spaces.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS: Videotape and leader's guide

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES: After watching the program, the participant will be able to explain the following:

- The definition of a confined space and the difference between a permit and non-permit required space;
- The details of the confined space entry permit system;
- The responsibilities of the entry team members: the entry supervisor, the standby attendant and the entrants.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:

DEFINITION OF A CONFINED SPACE

- The term "confined space" is more than just a description of an awkward work area, it's a term developed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to define specific types of work areas.
- A confined space is any space that meets the following conditions: 1) the space is not designed for continuous occupancy; 2) it is large enough for an employee to enter and perform work; and, 3) it has limited means of entry and exit.
- Some common types of confined spaces include pits, silos, tanks, pipes and vessels. While they come in various sizes and configurations, confined spaces all have one thing in common: they can be very dangerous.

THE WRITTEN CONFINED SPACE ENTRY PROGRAM

- To help protect workers from the hazards of working in confined spaces, the company has developed a written confined space entry program. This program is available for employee review and is based on the confined space regulations developed by OSHA.
- As part of the written plan, the company has evaluated and identified all confined spaces on site and maintains a list of them in the written plan.

PERMIT AND NON-PERMIT REQUIRED CONFINED SPACES

- Confined spaces are generally classified in one of two ways: permit required confined spaces and non-permit required confined spaces.
- Spaces classified as non-permit confined spaces do not have the potential to contain serious hazards and no special procedures are required to enter them.
- Permit required confined spaces have the potential to contain serious safety and health hazards.
- As the name implies, permit required confined spaces require a written permit to be issued and specific procedures to be followed before entry is allowed.

THE ENTRY PERMIT SYSTEM

- The company's entry permit system is a system used to control confined space hazards and ensure worker safety during the entry process.

- The personnel involved in the entry process are referred to as the entry team. Each member of the team must sign the permit to indicate they know and understand the information it contains.

THE ENTRY TEAM

- Entering a permit required confined space is a team effort and each team member has specific duties. The entry team consists of the entry supervisor, the attendant and the entrants.

The Entry Supervisor

- The written permit serves as a checklist for safe entry operations and the entry supervisor makes sure the process is followed.
- The entry supervisor makes sure all appropriate notations have been made on the permit and that all atmospheric testing specified by the permit has been conducted.
- After satisfying all pre-entry conditions listed on the permit, the entry supervisor must sign the permit indicating he has approved the entry to begin.
- At appropriate intervals during the entry process, the entry supervisor must confirm that the entry remains consistent with the terms of the entry permit.
- Should the entry supervisor determine that any part of the entry process has fallen outside the requirements of the entry permit, he must cancel the permit and the space must be evacuated.

The Attendant

- The attendant, sometimes called the standby attendant, acts as the eyes and ears of the entry process, monitoring conditions both inside and outside the space as well the condition of the entrants.
- During the entry process, the attendant must maintain an accurate count of the entrants inside the space and be able to accurately identify who is inside the space at any time.
- The attendant should call for an evacuation anytime conditions prohibited by the entry permit are detected or when an entrant exhibits behavioral symptoms that indicate a possible dangerous condition.
- Once the attendant determines an entrant must be evacuated, he must notify all other entrants to evacuate as well.

Entrants

- Confined space entrants are the only ones authorized to enter the space.
- Like all team members, entrants must know and understand any potential hazards they may face during the entry process and be familiar with the warning signs and symptoms of exposure to dangerous conditions.
- Entrants may request to observe any atmospheric testing used to certify the space as safe to enter.
- Once inside, the entrant must maintain communications with the standby attendant so the attendant can monitor his condition and the status of the operation.
- Should the attendant or entry supervisor call for an evacuation, the entrant must immediately exit the space.
- The entrant also has a responsibility to monitor the conditions inside the space and call for an evacuation anytime he discovers a condition prohibited by the permit or recognizes any warning signs or symptoms of exposure to hazardous conditions.
- Each member of the entry team has a specific role to play in the entry process. By following the requirements of the entry permit system, the entry team is able to work safely in confined spaces.