

Confined Space Toolbox Talk

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A ready-to-run 5-minute crew talk · Permit-Required Confined Spaces · OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146

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How to run this talk (5 minutes): Use this before any work in or around tanks, vaults, pits, silos, sewers, manholes, or similar spaces. Read each talking point aloud, then ask the discussion questions and let the crew answer. Close with the one rule, point out where your written permit program, entry permits, atmospheric testing gear, and rescue plan are kept, and pass the sign-in sheet on page 2. This is an awareness refresher — it does **not** replace the role-specific confined-space training your employer must provide, and **no one enters a permit space today on the strength of this talk.**

What a Confined Space Is — and Why

- **A confined space** is large enough to enter and work in, has **limited or restricted entry/exit**, and is **not designed for continuous occupancy** — tanks, vessels, silos, pits, vaults, manholes, sewers, ductwork.
- **A permit-required confined space (PRCS)** also has one or more serious hazards: a hazardous atmosphere, a material that could engulf you, an inward-sloping or converging shape that could trap you, or any other recognized serious hazard.
- **The atmosphere is the number-one killer.** Air can be **oxygen-deficient or -enriched**, contain **toxic gases** (like hydrogen sulfide or carbon monoxide), or be **flammable** — and you usually **can't see or smell it**. Many confined-space deaths are would-be rescuers who rushed in.
- **Never enter to “take a quick look” or to rescue someone** without following the permit program. If a permit space isn't safe, your employer must keep people out.

The Permit, Testing & the Team

- **The entry permit** is signed by the **entry supervisor** before entry. It lists the space, hazards, acceptable entry conditions, test results, controls, and the rescue arrangements — and it's posted or available at the entrance.
- **Test the air before and during entry** with a calibrated meter, in this order: **oxygen, then flammables, then toxics**. Conditions can change — continuous or periodic monitoring keeps checking.
- **Three roles:** the **authorized entrant** works inside; the **attendant** stays outside, monitors, and never enters to rescue; the **entry supervisor** authorizes and oversees the entry.

Discussion — Ask the Crew

1. Name a space on *our* site that's a permit-required confined space — what makes it “permit-required”?
2. In what order do we test the atmosphere, and why does oxygen come first?
3. Your coworker collapses inside a tank. You're the attendant — what do you do, and what do you *not* do?
4. What has to happen — permit, testing, isolation, rescue — before anyone goes in?

The one rule to remember today: No permit, no test, no attendant, no rescue plan — no entry. Test the air before and during entry, isolate the hazards, and if someone goes down inside, **call for rescue — do not rush in.**

This talk is a refresher, not the required training. OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146 requires a written permit-space program, role-based training for entrants, attendants, and supervisors, atmospheric testing, and rescue arrangements. The **Confined Space Training Kit** adds the full video (available in English or Spanish), quiz & answer key, certificates, and sign-in sheets — reusable for every new hire. [SafetyVideos.com/Confined_Space_Training_Video_p/73.htm](https://www.safetyvideos.com/Confined_Space_Training_Video_p/73.htm)

Control Hazards Before You Enter

- **Isolate energy and materials:** lock out/tag out equipment, and blank, blind, or disconnect lines so nothing (steam, chemicals, product) can flow in.
- **Ventilate** to establish and maintain a safe atmosphere — and keep testing. Ventilation supports, it doesn't replace, monitoring.
- **Never use pure oxygen to “freshen” the air** — an oxygen-enriched atmosphere makes materials burn violently.
- **Set up communication and retrieval** before entry: a way for entrant and attendant to stay in constant contact, and a full-body harness with a retrieval line where it aids non-entry rescue.

The Attendant & Rescue

- **The attendant's job is to keep the entrant alive from outside:** track who's inside, watch conditions, keep unauthorized people out, and order evacuation the moment something looks wrong.
- **Non-entry (retrieval) rescue is the default** — pull the entrant out with the retrieval system without anyone else going in. Entry rescue is only by trained, equipped rescuers.
- **Rescue must be arranged before entry.** Confirm who is performing rescue and that they can respond in time. **The attendant does not abandon their post to attempt a rescue.**
- **Evacuate immediately** on any alarm, symptom (dizziness, headache), or order to leave — get out first, ask questions after.

Toolbox Talk Sign-In Sheet

Attendance record · Confined Space Toolbox Talk · OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146

Date

Location / Facility

Presented by

#	Name (print)	Signature	Job title / Department
1			
2			
3			
4			
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15			

By signing above, each attendee acknowledges they participated in this confined-space toolbox talk on the date shown. Retain this sheet with your training records. **Note:** attendance at a toolbox talk is not confined-space entrant, attendant, or supervisor training or authorization — keep it with, not in place of, each worker's formal, role-based training records under OSHA 29 CFR 1910.146.