



CONFINED SPACE AWARENESS

Many areas at Harvard contain spaces that are considered “confined” because their configurations may hinder the activities of employees who must enter, work in, and exit from them. For example, employees who work in certain confined spaces must squeeze in and out through narrow openings and may perform their tasks while cramped or contorted.

OSHA uses the term “confined space” to describe such spaces. In addition, there are many instances where employees who work in confined spaces face increased risk of exposure to serious hazards. In some cases, confinement itself poses entrapment hazards.

In other cases, confined space work keeps employees closer to hazards, such as asphyxiating atmospheres or the moving parts of machinery. OSHA uses the term “Permit-Required Confined Space” (Permit Space) to describe those spaces which both meet the definition of “confined space” and pose health or safety hazards.

A **CONFINED SPACE** means a space that meets all three of the following criteria:

- It is large enough for an employee to enter and perform assigned work
- It has limited or restricted means of entry or exit
- It is not designed for continuous employee occupancy

Once a determination has been made that a space is “Confined” – it must be classified according to its known **or** its potential hazards.

A **NON-PERMIT CONFINED SPACE** is a confined space which contains secondary hazards (i.e., slips, falls, poor lighting, etc.) which are not anticipated to cause death or serious physical harm under normal operating conditions. Non-Permit Spaces do not contain a hazardous atmosphere or have the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere under normal conditions.

Examples of **Non-Permit Confined Spaces** Include:

- Air Handling Units
- Plenum Spaces
- Attic Spaces

A **PERMIT-REQUIRED CONFINED SPACE** is a Confined Space, which has one or more of the following characteristics:

Examples of **Permit-Required Confined Spaces** Include:

- Contains or has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere
 - Contains a material that has the potential for engulfing an Entrant
 - Has an internal configuration that may cause an employee to become trapped, or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or a tapering floor
 - Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazard
- Sewer Ejector Pits
 - Condensate Pits
 - Tanks
 - Boilers
 - Crawl Spaces
 - Manholes

TRAINING - Harvard University employees whose job duties require them to enter a confined space must take **Confined Space training**.