

Confined Space Entry

Near Miss

Contractors were working in an excavation, preparing to tap into a water line. Upon preparing the hot tap, the contractors were required to take a circumference measurement of the pipe. Due to the hazardous conditions surrounding the excavation, a Confined Space Entry (CSE) Permit was issued to enter the excavation.

While in the contractor was in the process obtaining the CSE Permit, the employees took an upper and a lower reading. The employees then left the site and returned 15 minutes later. Upon re-entrance to the CSE Excavation, the employees failed to take a lower reading before entering into the hole. The attendant also did not have a monitor available to take the readings from outside the excavation

On a separate occasion, two employees were working on a revamp project of a cooler. During work on this project, the area above the cooler was listed as a permit confined space entry. The attendant broke the plain of the confined space to retrieve tools. The attendant was also observed away from the space, out of communication distance of the entrant.

Factors to consider in preventing a similar incident at your site include the following:

Entry Permits

Entry permits must include the following information:

1. Test results;
2. Tester's initials or signature;
3. Name and signature of supervisor who authorizes entry;
4. Name of permit space to be entered, authorized entrant(s), eligible attendants, and individual(s) authorized to be entry supervisor(s);
5. Purpose of entry and known space hazards;
6. Measures to be taken to isolate permit spaces and to eliminate or control space hazards, i.e., locking out or tagging of equipment and procedures for purging, making inert, ventilating and flushing permit spaces;
7. Name and telephone numbers of rescue and emergency services;
8. Date and authorized duration of entry;
9. Acceptable entry conditions;
10. Communication procedures and equipment to maintain contact during entry;
11. Additional permits(s), such as for hot work, that have been issued to authorize work in the permit space;
12. Special equipment and procedures, including personal protective equipment and alarm systems; and
13. Any other information needed to ensure employee safety.

Attendant's Duties

1. Remain outside permit space during entry operations unless relieved by another authorized attendant;
2. Perform no-entry rescues when specified by employer's rescue procedure;
3. Know existing and potential hazards, including information on the mode of exposure, signs or symptoms, consequences of the exposure, and their physiological effects;
4. Maintain communication with and keep an accurate account of those workers entering the permit-required space;
5. Order evacuation of the permit space when a prohibited condition exists, when a

worker shows signs of physiological effects of hazardous exposure, when an emergency outside the confined space exists, and when the attendant cannot effectively and safely perform required duties;

6. Summon rescue and other services during an emergency;
7. Ensure that unauthorized persons stay away from permit spaces or exit immediately if they have entered the permit space;
8. Inform authorized entrant's and entry supervisor of entry by unauthorized persons; and;
9. Perform no other duties that interfere with the attendant's primary duties