

CONFINED SPACES

A confined space is an enclosed working environment where workers may be at risk of toxic atmospheres, lack of oxygen, heat, drowning, being trapped or fires. Examples of confined spaces include; trenches, vessels, pipes, ducts, tunnels and drains.

Work should only be carried out in confined spaces when necessary and there is no other way to carry out the work.

Considering the risks is an essential element of the work to prevent injuries, accidents and death.

Before entering a confined space, workers must be instructed about the potential hazards associated with the environment and receive relevant training, safe systems of work, equipment and rescue procedures.



KEY DISCUSSION POINTS:

- ▶ Is entry to the confined space essential, can the works be completed another way
- ▶ Will the worker have enough breathable air for the full duration
- ▶ Can the confined workspace be accessed safely
- ▶ What are the atmospheric hazards e.g. gases
- ▶ Consider the working conditions e.g. lighting, ventilation, temperature
- ▶ Ensure effective communication tools are available for workers
- ▶ Plan and arrange rescue procedures effectively
- ▶ Ensure all workers have the correct PPE to carry out the work
- ▶ Plan all work activities, how long will each task take and allow for provisions
- ▶ Ensure first aid equipment is available

This safety moment was by: **Paul Warnes, Energy & Process Divisional Director**