



# THE TRUE DANGER OF CONFINED SPACES

EMPIRE  
PACIFIC

*Risk Management, Inc.*

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Just how dangerous are confined spaces? Aren't all the warnings and procedural checks simply overkill? Hardly. Think about this: According to a study performed by Safety Sciences, the following types of confined space incidents resulted in injuries and/or fatalities:

<u>Type of Event</u>	<u>Number of Events</u>	<u>Number of Injuries Only</u>	<u>Number of Fatalities</u>
Atmospheric Conditions (lack of oxygen)	80	72	78
Explosion or Fire	15	49	15
Explosion or Fire at Point of Entry	23	20	32
Electric Shock	11	2	9
Trapped in Unstable Material (cave in)	16	0	16
Struck by Falling Objects	15	1	14

These numbers should tell you something:

- Fifty four % of the people exposed to oxygen deficient conditions died.
- For every fire within a confined space, one person died.
- Fire at the point of entry caused multiple fatalities in a single event.
- Cave-ins left 100 % of the victims dead.

Still think the safety rules pertaining to confined spaces are overkill? It is important to know what you are getting into. Has the space been recently inspected by certified industrial hygienist, marine chemist or shipyard competent person? Have instruments been used to determine the presence or absence of combustible or flammable vapors? Do these instruments show the oxygen level to be between 19.5 and 22%? Is a "safe for hot work/safe for workers" permit required? Are the conditions of the permit or certificate being followed to the letter?

Are the contents of the space stable? Construction workers beware. Confined spaces are not limited to tanks and the like. Trenches, utility vaults, and large diameter pipelines all present similar dangers. In fact, trench cave-ins are a leading cause of construction fatalities.

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Courtesy of TOOLBOXTOPICS.COM

Confined space work is dangerous. However, it can be done safely if appropriate precautions are taken. The hazards in most cases are invisible, so *take* those precautions before entering.

**Safety Recommendations:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Specific Topics:** \_\_\_\_\_

**M.S.D.S Reviewed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**List of Attendees**

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