

Template: adapt to your own procedure and risk assessment

Confined space entry permit steps

When: before anyone enters a confined space such as a tank, vessel, silo, pit, chamber or enclosed duct, where there is a risk from gas, fumes, lack of oxygen, flooding or engulfment.

BEFORE YOU START

First ask whether the work can be done from outside. If entry is needed, it needs a risk assessment, a safe system of work and, normally, a permit to work issued by an authorised person.

STEPS

- 1 ☐ **Issue the permit.** The authorised person names the space, the work, the entrants, the attendant and the time limits.
- 2 ☐ **Isolate the space.** Lock off mechanical and electrical equipment, and blank or disconnect pipework rather than relying on closed valves.
- 3 ☐ **Clean, purge and ventilate** the space as the permit sets out.
- 4 ☐ **Test the atmosphere from outside** with a calibrated gas detector, for oxygen, flammable gas and any toxic gases named in the risk assessment. Test at the top, middle and bottom.
- 5 ☐ **Record the readings** on the permit. Do not enter if any reading is outside the limits the permit sets.
- 6 ☐ **Check the rescue arrangements** are in place before anyone goes in: the rescue team, the equipment at the entrance (such as a tripod, winch and harness) and a way to raise the alarm.
- 7 ☐ **Brief everyone.** Entrants and attendant agree the hazards, how they will communicate and the signal to get out.
- 8 ☐ **Enter.** Entrants wear the equipment the permit lists, including a personal gas monitor. The attendant stays at the entrance throughout and logs everyone in and out.
- 9 ☐ **Keep monitoring.** Everyone leaves at once if an alarm sounds, ventilation fails or conditions change.
- 10 ☐ **Close the permit.** When the work is complete, everyone leaves, the attendant confirms the count and the permit is handed back and closed.

Never go in to help someone who has collapsed unless you are part of the trained rescue team with the right breathing apparatus. Would-be rescuers are often among those killed in confined space incidents.

TOOLBOX TALK

- Which spaces on this site count as confined spaces?
- Who is the authorised person today?
- What is the signal to get out, and what does the attendant do next?

Further reading: the Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 and HSE L101, Safe work in confined spaces.

ADAPTED AND APPROVED FOR THIS SITE

Site and equipment	Procedure or RAMS reference
Approved by (competent person)	Date and review date