

Overview

This standard is about preparing to enter and working safely in medium risk confined spaces. A confined space is any place, including any chamber, tank, vat, silo, pit, trench, pipe, sewer, flue, well or other similar space in which, by virtue of its enclosed nature, there arises a reasonably foreseeable specified risk. Risks could lead to serious injury or death through fire, explosion, gas, fumes, vapour, lack of oxygen, rising levels of liquid, asphyxiation or entrapment by free flowing solids.

Medium risk confined spaces:

- may have deeper entry where entrants may not be in sight of safety attendant or top person
- will have standard entries which could involve climbing or the use of access equipment
- will have identified but controlled specified risks present during entry or while working
- may involve working away from point of entry
- may involve more than one person entering the confined space.

Work in any confined space requires working in line with an agreed system of work that is based on a risk assessment. In addition, medium risk confined spaces:

- may require limited use of a rescue line
- may require fall protection equipment and means of assisted rescue such as a rescue winch
- will require the carrying of suitable escape sets for self rescue in the event of an emergency
- will require the presence of one or more people, positioned outside the confined space, who have designated responsibilities for controlling the entry and dealing with emergencies.

This standard includes preparing to enter and work safely in medium risk confined spaces, entering and exiting confined spaces safely, using equipment and tools in accordance with manufacturers' specifications, following procedures and working safely, using escape and emergency equipment and dealing with emergencies.

This standard is for anyone from any sector who needs to work in a medium risk confined space.

Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
1. confirm that any existing risk assessments are correct before starting work
 2. carry out dynamic risk assessments when required at appropriate times during the work
 3. set up and test signaling and communications systems before entering confined spaces
 4. use communication methods which are suitable for tasks and confined spaces
 5. check all equipment and tools are suitable and in good order before entering confined spaces
 6. select appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) which is in good condition
 7. select and examine escape sets for self rescue prior to starting work and replace them when defective
 8. report non-conformities with escape sets to appropriate people
 9. obtain authorisation for entry from the designated people supervising work
 10. set up, test and record results of appropriate monitoring equipment before entering confined spaces
 11. enter confined spaces when it is safe to do so
 12. maintain safety zones and control access and movement of people and vehicles around entry points in situations where people need to be kept clear
 13. obtain, set up and check access equipment that is appropriate for entry and exit
 14. use access equipment to enter and exit confined spaces in line with procedures for working in medium risk confined spaces
 15. use specified methods to introduce equipment and tools into confined spaces
 16. resolve any problems with equipment and tools before and during their use
 17. resolve any problems connected to entry, exit or work within confined spaces with relevant people
 18. follow employers' safe working procedures and equipment manufacturers' instructions
 19. monitor conditions and levels of risk within confined spaces on a continuous basis
 20. take suitable action to control all risks and to remedy any unsafe activity, equipment and environmental conditions without delay
 21. monitor and respond to information from monitoring equipment in

line with procedures

22. remain alert and respond to changing conditions in line with procedures at all times

23. use established signaling or communication protocols to initiate emergency plans

24. initiate emergency plans without delay when dangerous situations arise

25. use appropriate escape equipment for the environment as set down in procedures

26. carry and use escape sets for self-rescue at appropriate times in line with procedures and manufacturers' instructions

27. record and report emergency incidents and their circumstances in line with procedures

28. complete all documentation and reports at appropriate times

29. forward documentation and reports to appropriate people without delay

30. ensure equipment and tools are recovered from confined spaces when work is complete

31. close down and make work areas safe when work is finished

32. carry out after use checks and store equipment and tools in line with manufacturers' instructions

33. carry out after use checks on escape and emergency equipment after a safe exit and confirm it conforms to specification before storing it in the designated storage ready for the next job.

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

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1. the main principles and defining features of current confined spaces, health and safety and environmental legislation and regulations
2. approved codes of practice and guidance for working safely in confined spaces
3. personal duties and responsibilities under legislation
4. how to use work authorisations and permits to work
5. definitions of hazardous situations and different types and categories of specified risk
6. types of spaces that could become confined due to the presence of a specified risk
7. hazards, substances, and situations associated with medium risk confined spaces
8. how to carry out dynamic risk assessment to review risk, record findings and reduce risk of injury to self, colleagues and the general public
9. awareness of how emergency situations can arise in confined spaces
10. methods and techniques for using and wearing PPE
11. the limitations of equipment and how to identify when it is not working
12. manufacturers' instructions relating to use of equipment for accessing and working safely in a confined space
13. your role when working as part of a team and how to maintain safety when working with others
14. roles and responsibilities when dealing with emergencies
15. procedures for dealing with emergencies, incidents and near misses
16. confined space classification schemes
17. how to identify medium risk confined spaces
18. how to set up and inspect access equipment
19. the uses and limitations of escape sets and how to inspect and use them
20. entry procedures for medium risk confined spaces
21. how to assess and review risks and hazards, the hierarchy of control measures and how they can be used to minimise risks to an acceptable level for work to be carried out
22. how ventilation systems work and their benefits and disadvantages in confined spaces
23. why it is important to be vigilant to possible risks and hazards and changing conditions

24. procedures and methods of working suitable to the confined space classification and local conditions
25. the different types and limitations of monitoring equipment
26. ways to monitor conditions and work activity
27. why it is important to resolve problems about work in confined spaces without delay
28. how to resolve problems when other people or organisations are involved
29. signaling and communication systems and protocols for keeping in contact with other people while working in medium risk confined spaces and in emergency situations
30. how to follow manufacturers' instructions and procedures for preparing, pre and after use inspection and using tools and equipment
31. reporting systems for routine and non-routine work activities and emergency situations

Work in medium risk confined spaces

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