

Safety meeting blueprint

✓ Meeting Topic: Confined spaces

✓ Today's Date: _____

✓ Attendee Signatures:

Imagine this scenario: You're handling your normal job duties and you suddenly hear a voice calling out for help from inside a tank. Would you:

- enter the tank as quickly as possible to assist the person in distress?
- ignore the cries and hope someone else deals with it?
- find someone who's been trained in confined space rescue and let him or her know what's going on?

Hopefully, you selected the third option. But, unfortunately, many folks would rush into the space without thinking. And that's a bad idea. Consider: Nearly half the people who die inside confined spaces are would-be rescuers.

Ensure your safety

You should not only never attempt to rescue someone inside a confined space unless you know what you're doing, but you should also never enter a confined space without following safety steps.

One of the most common dangers of

confined space work is a hazardous atmosphere, which could be the result of the oxygen level dropping below 19.5%.

Or a space could have a flammable atmosphere caused by the evaporation of flammable liquids, byproducts of chemical reactions, or combustible dust.

Toxic atmosphere

Because the air inside doesn't circulate freely, a confined space could also have a toxic atmosphere, which could be caused by the product inside the space, the type of work being performed inside the space, or toxins from an area near the space.

(What types of hazardous atmospheres could we typically encounter here?)

To avoid this and other atmospheric hazards, you should always test the air inside a confined space before entering it. First, check for oxygen, then test for flammable or combustible gases and vapors, and then look for

toxic gases and vapors.

Important: Some gases and vapors are heavier than air and can settle at the bottom of a confined space. That's why it's important to test all areas of a space – the top, the middle and the bottom.

Also keep in mind that the work being performed inside a space could increase the risks, so you should continuously test the air while laboring inside the danger zone.

Ventilation system

If you determine the air inside a space could be hazardous, set up a ventilation system to protect yourself. You could use a blower or a fan to remove harmful air.

Even with the added ventilation, though, you should also put on a respirator before entering a space. Make sure you have the right type of respirator for the hazards you could encounter.

Thanks for your attention. And remember, let's stay safe out there!

(See next page for test)

Safety meeting blueprint: Test your knowledge

Meeting Topic: Confined spaces

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| <p>1. Which of the following conditions could create a toxic atmosphere within a confined space?</p> <p>a. The type of work being performed inside the space</p> <p>b. The presence of lightning outside the space</p> <p>c. The speed of the wind outside the space</p> <p>d. All of the above</p> | <p>4. When testing the air inside a confined space before entering it, you should first check the</p> <p>a. Wind speed inside the space</p> <p>b. Temperature inside the space</p> <p>c. Oxygen level</p> <p>d. None of the above</p> | <p>7. Nearly half the people who die inside confined spaces are</p> <p>a. Those who perform work inside the space</p> <p>b. Would-be rescuers</p> <p>c. Attendants who monitor work inside the space</p> <p>d. None of the above</p> | <p>9. A flammable atmosphere inside a confined space could be caused by</p> <p>a. The evaporation of flammable liquids</p> <p>b. Byproducts of a chemical reaction</p> <p>c. Combustible dust</p> <p>d. All of the above</p> |
| <p>2. If the air inside a space might be hazardous, you should put on</p> <p>a. A hard hat</p> <p>b. A respirator</p> <p>c. Safety boots</p> <p>d. None of the above</p> | <p>5. Dangerous air inside a confined space could be caused by oxygen deficiency, which is when the oxygen content drops below</p> <p>a. 49.5%</p> <p>b. 39.5%</p> <p>c. 29.5%</p> | <p>8. Because some gases and vapors are heavier than air, you should test the</p> <p>d. 19.5%</p> | <p>10. You should never enter a confined space without</p> <p>a. Following safety steps</p> <p>b. Turning on your cell phone</p> <p>c. Letting your spouse know you won't be home tonight</p> <p>d. None of the above</p> |
| <p>3. If you're handling your normal job duties and you hear someone calling out for help from</p> | | | |

Test your knowledge: The answers

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| <p>1. a</p> <p>2. b</p> <p>3. False. Never rush into a confined space to help someone in distress unless you're familiar with the steps needed to protect yourself.</p> <p>4. c</p> <p>5. d</p> <p>6. c. Make sure the ventilation system is set up so that any potentially hazardous</p> | <p>7. b</p> <p>8. True. Also keep in mind that conditions inside a space can change, so you should periodically recheck the air quality while laboring inside the space.</p> <p>9. d</p> <p>10. a</p> |
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