
WORKSAFE

► Identifying Confined Spaces

Confined spaces present several potential risks to worker safety and can be deadly if the hazards within them are not eliminated or controlled. Typical hazards of confined spaces include lack of oxygen, mold and bacteria, exposure to chemicals, toxic or flammable materials and entrapment.

A confined space typically has the following four features:

- Enclosed or partially enclosed
- Not designed or intended for continuous human occupancy
- Limited or restricted means for entry or exit that may complicate first aid, evacuation, rescue, or other emergency response services
- Large enough and configured so a worker could enter to perform work

Confined spaces are not always easy to identify.

Proactive occupational health and safety includes identifying the confined areas in your work location before they become an issue. Start by looking at confined areas where work does not normally take place and where it might be difficult to get an injured person out of a space. It may be necessary to consult a qualified person to identify the confined spaces in your workplace.

Adapted from: www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/confinedspace_intro.html

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