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Working in Confined Space Guidance



Coventry City Council

www.coventry.gov.uk

Introduction

This guidance outlines the safe system of work that needs to be adopted for work that involves access into a confined space.

A confined space is a place which is substantially enclosed (though not always entirely), and where serious injury can occur from hazardous substances or conditions within the space or nearby (e.g. lack of oxygen).

Clarification as to what constitutes a specified risk can be found in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Approved Code of Practice for confined space working (see below for further information).

Coventry City Council regards confined space entry as a high-risk activity; consequently the City Council requires that all entry into confined spaces to be controlled by the application of Permit-to-Work system.

Contractors whose work requires entry into confined space must produce detailed risk assessments and method statements prior to the work commencing. Proof of competency and training for all parties both entering and supervising the confined space entry must be provided and available for review/inspection.

This guidance details how Coventry City Council controls the access to and work undertaken within confined spaces. It should be read in conjunction with the Permit to Work Guidance.

Significant Risks

- Asphyxiation
- A lack of oxygen
- Poisonous gas, fume or vapour
- Space suddenly filled with liquids or solids or sudden blockage collapse of free-flowing solids
- Fire and explosions
- Dust present in high concentrations
- Hot conditions

Managers/Head Teachers

Under the Permit to Work Guidance, if you become a Permit Authoriser, it is your responsibility to confirm employees / contractors are competent to enter or gain access into a confined space. If you do not have the technical knowledge to make this assessment, you can use the services of the Council's Repairs and Maintenance Team. A charge is made for this service. In addition, any person undertaking work in a confined space must be familiar with on-site emergency procedures.

- A suitable and sufficient, site specific risk assessment of the risks for all work activities has been undertaken identifying all hazards associated with entry into a confined space and precautions to be taken prior to work commencing
- An effective arrangement for raising the alarm and emergency rescue is in place and practiced
- Safe systems of work and controls are being applied
- All employees at risk are provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training

In addition, you must ensure that:

- No person at work is to enter a confined space to carry out work for any purpose if it is reasonably practicable to achieve that purpose without such entry
- Where entry into a confined space is required, entry and all work within it, is managed in line with the City Council Permit to Work guidance

Employees/Contractors

- Prior to accessing or working within a confined space, you must familiarise yourself with the Council's Permit to Work guidance and have seen the completed activity specific permit form. You must sign the relevant declarations to confirm that you have received and understood all known hazards related to the work activity
- Any person working within a confined space must be familiar with the contents of the risk assessment, the appropriate method statement and the site specific emergency procedures
- The Council's 'Permit to Work – Confined Spaces' procedure applies to work carried out on council sponsored work sites. Employees, contractors and all visitors are expected to comply with the requirements of any permits in force
- Notify your line manager/supervisor of any problems with the controls that have been implemented
- Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person
- Follow any instruction, information and training received
- Notify their line manager/supervisor if they experience any health problems that could be connected to entry into a confined space

Provision of Information, Instruction and Training

Specific training for work in confined spaces will depend on an individual's previous experience and the type of work they will be doing. Training should cover:

1. an awareness of the Confined Spaces Regulations and in particular the need to avoid entry to a confined space, unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so
2. an understanding of the work to be undertaken, the hazards, and the necessary precautions;
3. an understanding of safe systems of work, with particular reference to 'permits-to-work' where appropriate
4. how emergencies arise, the need to follow prepared emergency arrangements and the dangers of not doing so

HSE Guidance

Safe work in confined spaces. Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 [Click Here](#)

Approved Code of Practice, Regulations and guidance L101 (Second edition) HSE Books 2009 ISBN 978 0 7176 6233 3 Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) on confined spaces [Click Here](#)

Confined Spaces – A brief guide to working safely (INDG258 Rev1) [Click Here](#)

Legislation

The Confined Spaces Regulations 1997 [Click Here](#)

Coventry City Council Guidance

Permit to Work Guidance

Contractors Guidance [Click Here](#)

Contacts

For further information contact:

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service on 024 7683 3172
or e-mail healthandsafetyservicesadmin@coventry.gov.uk

Statutory Compliance Team on 024 7683 2897 or e-mail phillip.mcgarra@coventry.gov.uk

Permit requests/Repairs and Maintenance Team on 024 7683 2960
or e-mail simon.amos@coventry.gov.uk or paul.aitken@coventry.gov.uk

If you need this information in another language or format
please contact Health and Safety on 024 7683 3172

Confined Spaces Permit

A permit to work must be issued prior to any person entering a confined space in order to undertake work.

PART 1: JOB DETAILS – To be completed by the Permit Requestor		REF:	
Nature of job:			
Site Location:			
Permit Operator Name:		If sub-contractor, please give details:	
PART 2: SAFETY PRECAUTIONS - To be completed by the Permit Requestor			
NB: Work cannot commence without the following information. Tick the boxes below as appropriate to those precautions that have been taken. Those boxes which are not relevant must be marked N/A			
Risk assessment method statement	Yes	No	
A signed and dated risk assessment must be submitted (the risk assessment must be suitable and sufficient and relevant to the work being undertaken). Has the content been reviewed prior to work commencing?			
As a method statement detailing the safe system of work been adopted to accompany the risk assessment and has this been signed and dated.			
Part 3 PERMIT AUTHORISER to confirm P1 & 2 complete and that a risk assessment, method statement are attached	SIGN & DATE:		
PERMIT VALID UNTIL: (NB: A new permit will be required if the work specified in Part 1 does not commence on or before this date)			
PART 4: PRECAUTIONS – To be completed by Permit Requestor Ensure supporting documentation attached and/or available on site.	Yes	No	
Does the risk assessment identify a requirement for atmospheric testing? (If yes complete Part 4a below)			
If identified by risk assessment, has rescue equipment been checked?			
Is there an emergency plan in place?			
Are the required warning signs/barriers erected around access?			
Is appropriate first aid equipment available on site?			
Are operatives competent to undertake work?			
Are all operatives in receipt of/wearing the appropriate equipment/PPE?			
Where adverse weather conditions may affect safety, has a weather forecast been obtained? Eg. Consider potential for flooding.			
Part 4a: ATMOSPHERIC TESTING	Yes	N/A	
• Low oxygen			
• Flammable gas			
• High oxygen			
• Toxic gas			
• Other – please specify:			
• The atmosphere was found to be within permitted levels and work can proceed?			
State any other precautions required:			
NAME OF PERMIT REQUESTOR:		SIGN & DATE:	
PART 5: PERMIT OPERATOR	I've read and understood the conditions of this permit.	SIGN & DATE:	
PART 6: HAND BACK: <i>Permit Requestor to complete pink & white copy then notify Permit Authoriser to cancel permit.</i> <i>*delete as appropriate</i>	I certify that the work has been completed/partially* completed and left in a safe condition.	SIGN & DATE:	
PART 7: HAND BACK: <i>Permit Authoriser to complete & file with yellow copy.</i> <i>*delete as appropriate</i>	I certify that the work has been completed/partially* completed and the permit is now cancelled.	SIGN & DATE:	