



Confined Space Awareness

West Virginia University
Environmental Health and Safety



Confined Space Definitions

1. Confined space is a space that: (1) Is large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work; and (2) Has limited or restricted means for entry or exit; and (3) Is not designed for continuous employee occupancy.

2. Permit-required confined space is a confined space that (1) Contains or has the potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere; (2) Contains a material that has the potential for engulfing an entrant; (3) Has an internal configuration that an entrant could be trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor which slopes downward and tapers to a small cross-section; or (4) Contains any other recognized safety or health hazard.

3. Non-permit confined space is a confined space that does not contain or, with respect to atmospheric hazards, have the potential to contain any hazard capable of causing death or serious harm.



Confined Space Awareness at Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Facilities

- Atmospheric confined space hazards include those with an oxygen deficiency or the presence of toxic or flammable/explosive gases.
- Physical confined space hazards include those associated with mechanical or electrical energy, temperature, engulfment, falling objects, and wet surfaces or standing/moving water.
- WVU permit-required confined spaces include cotton cyclones, feed mixers, septic tanks and lift stations, manure pits, irrigation/drinking/stock/rinse/recycling water tanks, water tank trucks, unventilated lysimeter vaults, silos, feed storage bins, liquid feed tanks, and external equipment wash facility cone and rinse tanks.
- WVU non-permit confined spaces include ventilated lysimeter vaults, concrete standpipes, walk-in coolers, air filter/cooling plenums, ventilation motor housings, attic/basement crawl spaces, storage containers, and irrigation/pump sumps.