# Confined Spaces Permit Required – Landscaping Meeting Kit




## WHAT'S AT STAKE

In landscaping, workers may encounter confined spaces that pose significant hazards, including areas like manholes, utility vaults, septic tanks, cisterns, and other enclosures. These spaces can be dangerous due to limited access, restricted airflow, and the potential for hazardous atmospheres.

## WHAT'S THE DANGER

The dangers of confined spaces are varied and often not immediately apparent.

**Specific Risks**

1. **Hazardous Atmospheres**

- **Oxygen Deficiency:** Confined spaces may have lower oxygen levels due to poor ventilation, making it difficult to breathe and leading to unconsciousness or death.
- **Toxic Gases:** The accumulation of toxic gases such as carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide, or methane. These gases are often colorless and odorless, and difficult to detect.
- **Flammable Atmospheres:** Flammable vapors or gases can create a risk of explosion or fire.

1. **Engulfment**

- **Loose Materials:** Workers may be at risk of being engulfed by loose materials such as soil, sand, or gravel.

1. **Entrapment**

- **Restricted Entry and Exit:** Confined spaces often have narrow openings that make entry and exit difficult.
- **Moving Machinery:** Machinery or moving parts can pose a risk of entrapment or injury.

1. **Physical Hazards**

- **Structural Instability:** Confined spaces may have unstable structures or deteriorating materials.

- **Temperature Extremes:** Some confined spaces can have extreme temperatures.

# HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

**Pre-Entry Procedures**

1. **Identify and Evaluate the Space**
    - **Confined Space Assessment:** Before any work begins, conduct a thorough assessment of the space to determine if it meets the criteria for a permit-required confined space.
    - **Hazard Evaluation:** Identify all potential hazards within the space, including atmospheric hazards, physical hazards, and the presence of any materials that could cause engulfment.

1. **Obtain and Review the Permit**
    - **Permit Requirements:** A permit must be obtained before entering any permit-required confined space.
    - **Review and Approval:** The permit should be reviewed and approved by a qualified person.

1. **Prepare the Site and Equipment**
    - **Ventilation:** Ensure the space is adequately ventilated to remove any hazardous atmospheres.
    - **Atmospheric Monitoring:** Use calibrated gas detectors to continuously monitor the atmosphere inside the confined space for oxygen levels, toxic gases, and flammable vapors.
    - **Rescue Equipment**: Have appropriate rescue equipment readily available, such as lifelines, and harnesses.

**Entry and Work Procedures**

1. **Authorized Entry Only**
    - **Trained Personnel:** Only workers who have received specific training in confined space entry and the hazards associated with the particular space should be allowed to enter.
    - **Entry Attendant:** An entry attendant should be stationed outside the space to monitor the workers inside, maintain communication, and initiate emergency procedures if necessary.

1. **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
    - **PPE Requirements:** Wear the appropriate PPE as specified in the permit, including helmets, gloves, protective clothing, and respiratory protection if required.
    - **Continuous Monitoring:** Continuously monitor the atmosphere and conditions inside the confined space.

1. **Communication and Emergency Preparedness**
    - **Establish Communication:** Maintain clear communication between workers inside the space, the entry attendant, and any other relevant personnel.
    - Ensure workers know the emergency response plan.

**Post-Entry Procedures**

1. **Close and Secure the Space**

- **Secure the Area:** Once the work is complete, secure the confined space to prevent unauthorized entry.
- **Review and File the Permit:** Review the completed permit to ensure no issues arose during the work.

1. **Debrief and Evaluate**
    - **Conduct a Debrief:** After the work is completed, hold a debriefing session with all involved workers.
    - **Update Procedures:** Use the feedback from the debriefing to update confined space entry procedures, training programs, and safety protocols as needed.

**Training and Certification**

1. **Regular Training and Refresher Courses**
    - **Confined Space Training:** Provide regular, comprehensive training for all workers who may enter or be involved in confined space work. Conduct refresher courses periodically.

## FINAL WORD

By following permit-required procedures, and being prepared for emergencies, workers can significantly reduce the risks associated with confined space entry.