



# WHSC Confined Spaces Training



**Working in a confined space can prove fatal** for those entering the space and for those who try to rescue them. With limited routes of entry and exit, a lack of natural ventilation and sudden atmospheric and physical changes, confined spaces are among the most dangerous environments in which to work. It only takes a couple of breaths to render a worker unconscious and unable to escape an oxygen-deficient confined space. Without the proper equipment and training in rescue procedures, the person who enters to help that worker may also succumb. In fact, an estimated 60 per cent of the fatalities associated with confined spaces have been among the would-be rescuers.

Almost every workplace has some sort of confined space. A confined space is a fully or partially enclosed space that is not normally designed or intended for human occupancy and in which atmospheric hazards may occur. A few examples include caissons, boilers, enclosed crawl spaces, furnaces, pits, vessels, digesters, silos, storage tanks, reactors, ducts, septic tanks, sewers, tunnels and vaults.

To safeguard the health of workers entering confined spaces and performing related work, Ontario's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations established a number of minimum requirements to effectively control the risks associated with working in this type of hazardous environment. Chief among these requirements is training.

The Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC) offers three high-quality training programs to help prepare joint health and safety committee members, employers, supervisors, workers and other workplace parties to meet and exceed, Ontario's confined space requirements. All training programs are delivered by WHSC-qualified, knowledgeable instructors and are meant to complement, not replace, additional workplace-specific training requirements.

## Confined Spaces\*

Program Duration: 3 hours

Participants will discuss potential hazards and legal requirements relevant to confined space entry outlined in the Confined Spaces Regulation. They will review and discuss the key elements of a confined space entry program, including testing and monitoring of the atmosphere and the various types of equipment and tools that help to protect workers. The need to develop workplace specific confined space entry procedures with input from joint committees and workers is discussed along with the provision of effective worker training.

**Note:** *This program is not designed to satisfy the legal training requirements for workers entering confined spaces or performing related work.*

# TRAINING

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# WHSC Confined Spaces Training *cont'd*

## Confined Spaces Entry and Hazard Recognition

Program Duration: 6 hours

This one-day program is designed for workers required to enter confined spaces and those who perform related work. It is the first in a two-step process of confined spaces training employers are legally required to provide in Ontario. Participants review the legally required components of a workplace/plan-specific confined space program – focussing on hazard assessment, entry permits, atmospheric testing and on-site rescue procedures. They will then explore the hazards of confined spaces and discuss the work procedures and strategies for identifying potential hazards. Various measures for eliminating these hazards will also be identified and discussed. In addition, specific attention will be paid on the use and maintenance of respirators and other personal protective equipment (PPE) along with duties of attendants and the aspects of on-site rescue.

**Note:** *A similar program is available for the construction sector. After completion of either WHSC Confined Spaces Entry and Hazard Recognition, workers must also receive workplace and plan-specific training in order to comply with confined space entry requirements as set out by law. This training must be developed in consultation with the joint health and safety committee or worker representative.*

## Confined Spaces Plan and Program

Program Duration: 12 hours

This comprehensive two-day program prepares participants to play a proactive role in the development and implementation of a confined space program and plan(s) as required by Ontario's health and safety legislation. Participants will first identify and discuss characteristics of a confined space and explore the unique hazards that may pose a risk to worker health and safety. These hazards include the accumulation of toxic gas, oxygen deficiency and exit and entry impairment. The minimum legal requirements for developing a confined space program and plan(s) will also be outlined in the program. Building upon these minimums, participants will explore the key elements of an effective confined space program, including hazard assessment, entry permit systems, worker training methods and the development of specific confined space plan(s). Throughout participants will be encouraged to link the discussion back to their own workplaces and work experiences with an eye to ensuring participants are properly equipped to prevent confined space tragedies in their workplaces.

\* *Participant materials are available in French for programs marked with an asterisk. Upon request, any of our training programs are available for delivery by a French-speaking, WHSC-qualified instructor.*

