

## SAFETY MEETING

Note: Our company conducts scheduled safety meetings to focus attention on one major safety topic per meeting. Should an employee have a question on any subject related to safety or job procedure, it will be addressed by the person conducting the meeting.

## CONFINED SPACE

You see a fellow worker unconscious in a confined space such as a tank, silo, pit, etc.. What do you do? Your first instinct may be to rush in and either give first aid or, at least, pull your co-worker out of danger. Wrong! In such a situation do not enter the confined space! Get help immediately. An emergency rescue is required. Rescue personnel must have, at the minimum, certification in first aid and CPR. They would bring to the scene the proper safety equipment to protect themselves and help insure a rescue.

### DANGER

#### PERMIT REQUIRED-CONFINED SPACE---AUTHORIZED ENTRANTS ONLY.

If you see the above warning sign on a job site, do not enter the designated confined space without proper training and authorization. In fact, if you see the above warning during permit entry work operations, you would not be able to enter the designated space because it would be sealed off, barricaded, or have a person at the entrance guarding against unauthorized entry. Why? Because permit required confined-space is extremely dangerous and requires special training and education before a worker is allowed to enter and requires special safety measures to protect the worker.

Exactly what is a confined space? A confined space, as its name implies, is a space which has limited access and is not designed for continuous occupancy. There are many confined spaces which do require special measures for working. However, a confined space which has one (1) or more of the below listed characteristics is a **permit-required** confined space:

- a. an actual or potential hazardous atmosphere.
- b. a material that has the potential of engulfing the entrant.
- c. an internal configuration that might cause an entrant to be trapped or asphyxiated by its shape.
- d. contains any serious safety or health hazard.

Be aware of the potential danger of any confined space. If you were to enter a confined space with an atmospheric oxygen concentration of 15%, you would not be able to come out. You might get in, but you would have a strong chance of dying. It's that simple! It's that tragic! 19.5% to 23.5% oxygen is the acceptable limit. Confined spaces are dangerous. One last note to think about -- some materials such as fluoride gas or cadmium vapor may produce transient effects which may pass without medical attention. Twelve to 72 hours later, you may collapse and die.