Purpose

To protect employees from the hazards associated with entering and conducting operations in permit-required confined spaces in accordance with Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 437-002-0146 Confined Spaces.

Definitions

Confined space – A space that meets all of the following:
- Large enough and so configured that an employee can fully enter the space and perform work.
- Has limited or restricted means for entry and/or exit.
- Is not designed for continuous human occupancy.

Permit-required confined space (permit space) – A confined space that has one or more of the following characteristics:
- Contains, or has a potential to contain, a hazardous atmosphere.
- Contains a material that has the potential to engulf an entrant.
- Has an internal configuration such that an entrant could become trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor which slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross-section.
- Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazard that can inhibit an entrant’s ability to self-rescue.

Entry – The action by which any part of an employee’s body breaks the plane of an opening into a confined space. Entry (or entry operations) also refers to the period during which an employee occupies a confined space.

Policy

Permit-required confined space entry shall not be initiated until all applicable requirements of the Oregon State University Confined Space Entry Program have been satisfied.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to anyone who is engaged in duties or activities connected to the University.

Awareness Training

This Safety Instruction Document serves as a means of providing awareness training to all employees who work in areas where permit spaces are present.

The Confined Space Entry Program contains or references the following information:

- Policy and Responsibilities
- Definitions
- Identification, evaluation and documentation
- Procedures for entering a permit space
- Completing the entry permit
- Duties of entrants, attendants, and entry supervisors
- Alternate procedure for entering a permit space
- Employee training
- Rescue and emergency services
- Annual program review

All confined spaces will be evaluated using the Confined Space Evaluation Form. The collection of information, including location and potential hazards, will be maintained by EH&S in a Catalog of Evaluated Spaces.

Training will be provided in the following manner:

- When there is a change in permit-space operations that presents a hazard for which the employee has not been trained.
- Appropriate use of all necessary and required equipment
- Before the employee is initially assigned duties.
- Before there is a change in the employee’s assigned duties.
- When the employee does not follow entry procedures.
- When there changes to the permit program.
Recognition of Permit Spaces

When appropriate and/or feasible, warning signs may be posted at the entrance of permit spaces. However, employees should develop the skills and knowledge to recognize and identify potential permit spaces.
Permit Space Entry

Only those employees who have had the proper training (entry supervisors, attendants and entrants), as outlined in the Confined Space Entry Program, are authorized to conduct activities associated with permit spaces.

Entry into a permit space requires the use of a Confined Space Entry Permit. The permit, posted at the entrance, describes:

- The identity of the space that will be entered
- The nature of the work to be accomplished
- Any known or potential physical or atmospheric hazards
- The procedures and equipment used to either eliminate or control those hazards
- Means of verifying continued control
- Emergency plans
- Authorization to enter the space
- Cancellation of the permit
- Review of the permit

Alternate Entry

While still a permit space, alternate entry allows entry into the space without the need for an attendant. Authorization for alternate entry can only be granted upon following the same protocols for granting authorization for permit entry. The significant difference is that in alternate entry all physical hazards have been eliminated and atmospheric hazards are controlled. See the Confined Space Entry Program for additional information regarding alternate entry prerequisites.

Contractors

Contractor only entry

The OSU Point of Contact will review and discuss each contracted job with the contractor before the work begins and upon its completion. The OSU Point of Contact will inform the contractor about:

- The Confined Space Entry Program.
- Other relevant OSU programs and procedures, and
- All known or potential hazards in that space and the immediate surrounding area.

The contractor will inform the OSU Point of Contact about the permit-space program that the contractor will follow as well as any unknown hazards encountered or subsequently created.

Contractor and OSU employee joint entry

The OSU Point of Contact will coordinate entry operations with the contractor so that contract workers and OSU employees work together, following OSU’s permit space program.