

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MOORHEAD

NON-PERMIT CONFINED SPACE ENTRY PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

Many workplaces contain spaces that are considered to be "confined" because their configurations hinder the activities of any employees who must enter into, work in, and exit from them. In many instances, employees who work in confined spaces also face increased risk of exposure to serious physical injury from hazards such as entrapment, engulfment, and hazardous atmospheric conditions. Confinement itself may pose entrapment hazards, and work in confined spaces may keep employees closer to hazards, such as an asphyxiating atmosphere, than they would have otherwise. For example, confinement, limited access, and restricted airflow can result in hazardous conditions that would not arise in an open workplace.

A **confined space** has limited or restricted means of entry or exit, is large enough for an employee to enter and perform assigned work, and is not designed for continuous occupancy by the employee. These spaces may include, but are not limited to underground tunnels, tanks, crawl spaces, pits and, vessels, and manholes.

A **permit-required confined space** is one that meets the definition of a confined space and has one or more of these characteristics: (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 might cause an entrant to be trapped or asphyxiated by inwardly converging walls or by a floor that slopes downward and tapers to a smaller cross section, and/or (4) contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazards.

A **non-permit confined space** means 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 physical harm.

Permit-required confined spaces may be reclassified as non-permit confined spaces if certain criteria are met. If these criteria are met, rescue teams, special PPE, etc., are not required. The criteria include the following: 1) The space poses no actual or potential hazardous atmospheres; 2) All hazards within the space can be eliminated without entry into the space, such as locking and tagging equipment so it cannot be operated while employees are working inside; 3) Forced-air ventilation to control atmospheric hazards does not constitute elimination of hazards.

At Minnesota State University Moorhead confined spaces are found in the following areas:

- Heating Plant's boilers, DA tank, condensate tank, and blow down tank (permit required)
- Heating Plant's underground fuel storage (permit required)
- Stormwater lift stations and manholes (permit required)
- Langseth Hall Acid Neutralization Tank (permit required)

- Building water storage tanks (permit required)
- Exterior sump pits (permit required)
- Swimming pool sand filter tanks (permit required)
- Nemzek Hall's basement area surrounding the swimming pool (non-permit)
- Underground utility tunnels (non-permit)
- Basement crawl spaces (non-permit)
- Elevator pits (non-permit)

NON-PERMIT CONFINED SPACE ENTRY/EXIT PROCEDURES

1. Prior to entering a non-permit confined space tunnel or crawl space the authorized entrant must contact a "responsible person" and notify of entering the space. During regular work hours (7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday) contact the Physical Plant's main office: phone - 477-2662 or radio - Channel 2. During non-regular work hours contact Public Safety Dispatch: phone - 477-2449 or radio - Channel 1. The authorized entrant should be prepared to provide the "responsible person" the following information:
 - a. Person(s) entering
 - b. Entrance location
 - c. Exit location
 - d. Expected exit time
2. The responsible person will document the information onto the Non-Permit Confined Space Entry Log for Tunnel & Crawl Space Areas and initial.
3. Maintain occasional communications with the "responsible person" by utilizing radio, cell phone, text messaging, or other means of contact.
4. Notify the "responsible person" when exiting the confined space.
5. The "responsible person" will document the actual exit time on the Entry Log.
6. If the "responsible person" is not notified of an exit in a timely fashion an emergency search and rescue may be pursued.

Training

Employees expected to work in non-permit confined spaces must receive training prior to initial entry and as needed or if changes occur to the non-permit confined space.

Recordkeeping

1. Non-permit confined space entry records will be kept for a minimum of 30 days after exit.
2. Training records will be kept by the Department of Environmental Health and Safety.

Emergency Rescue

Emergency rescue is the extrication or removal of an employee from a confined space. The employee may be ill or injured. An emergency rescue plan must be discussed with all employees before any entry into a non-permit confined space is made.

Moorhead Fire and Rescue is the primary contact in providing all confined space emergency rescue procedures. Should an emergency rescue be required call 911. Then report the rescue to Public Safety at 477-2449.

Informing Contract Employees

MSUM must inform any contractors whom they hire to enter non-permit spaces about MSUM's experience with the spaces and entry requirements. Contractors have the option of dedicating a "responsible person" from their own employer or by using MSUM with the procedures previously mentioned.

Reviewed and updated July 2026