TOOLBOX TALKS

CONFINED SPACES

Toolbox Talks are designed to promote safety discussions and best practices on the jobsite. To see more Toolbox Talks, please visit cat.com/toolboxtalks.

BE AWARE

- A confined space is any enclosed space where there is a risk of death or serious injury from hazardous substances or dangerous conditions (e.g., lack of oxygen)
- Some are easy to identify (storage tanks, silos, enclosed drains, sewers, etc). Others are less obvious, but equally dangerous (open-topped chambers, vats, furnace combustion chambers, ductwork and unventilated or poorly ventilated rooms)

THE DANGERS

- Lack of oxygen
- Poisonous gases, fumes or vapors
- The unexpected rush of liquids, gases or solids into a space
- Fire and explosions (from flammable vapors, excess oxygen, etc.)
- High concentrations of dust
- Extreme heat leading to dangerous increases in body temperature

SAFETY TIPS

- Can the work be done another way? Work-planning or a different approach can often reduce the need for confined space working
- Make use of safe systems for working inside such spaces
- Ensure the entrance is large enough for rescue workers to quickly access a worker in need
- Harness workers to lifelines running to the outside of the space
- Improve ventilation with additional holes or vents. Mechanical ventilation may be necessary to ensure an adequate supply of fresh air
- Use non-sparking tools and specially protected lighting where flammable or potentially explosive atmospheres are likely
- Do not try to sweeten the air in a confined space with oxygen. This can greatly increase the risk of a fire or explosion

Discussion Date: _____

Employee Participants:

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There are a lot of moving parts on the jobsite. To find a safety topic relevant to your operation, please visit cat.com/toolboxtalks.

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