



CONFINED SPACE ENTRY POLICY (01/01/99; Rev 1/4/2010; 7/1/2015)

The Language Used In This Document Does Not Create An Employment Contract Between The Employee And The Agency. This Document Does Not Create Any Contractual Rights Or Entitlements. The Agency Reserves The Right To Revise The Content Of This Document, In Whole Or In Part. No Promises Or Assurances, Whether Written Or Oral, Which Are Contrary To Or Inconsistent With The Terms Of This Paragraph Create Any Contract Of Employment.

PURPOSE

This policy sets forth requirements to protect employees of the South Carolina (SC) Department of Administration working in facilities when performing a confined space entry.

HAZARDS

Among the major hazards of confined spaces in Department of Administration facilities is hazardous **atmospheres** that could result in asphyxiation due to low oxygen levels or oxygen displacement; high oxygen content that could increase the potential for explosion; toxic gases such as carbon monoxide or hydrogen sulfide from the decay of plant materials or animals, or fumes produced from welding; or flammable gases such as from natural gas leaks. Some confined spaces are pits subject to flooding (**engulfment**) while others have **physical** shapes or obstructions or limited access that hinder egress. Many of the confined spaces in Department of Administration facilities contain utilities such as steam, electrical and water supply, waste disposal, and telecommunications. Confined spaces also have **environmental** hazards, i.e., they can amplify the sounds produced by equipment and power tools, and can cause stressors such as hot/cold temperature extremes. Respiratory problems can result from **biological** hazards such as molds and mildew. There could also be **psychological** anxiety of being inside the confined space.

POLICY

Any employee of the Department of Administration or a contracted organization involved in performing a confined space entry in a Department of Administration owned or operated facility shall do so in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy, the Department of Administration Confined Space Program and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, particularly Chapter 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, standards 1910.146 and 1926.21 Confined Space Entry. Affected Department of Administration teams include, but are not limited to: General Services Division's Facilities Management (FM) Building Maintenance, FM Building Systems, FM Energy and Environmental, and FM State House Maintenance.

PROCEDURES

1. Refer to the Department of Administration Confined Space Program for identified confined space locations in Department of Administration facilities and specific protective procedures. Spaces were identified by employees, surveyed and classified as not a confined space, confined space or permit required confined spaces. A pictorial directory and hazard analysis is also available that describes known confined spaces and typically has photographs, layout diagrams and a Job Safety Analysis Worksheet with safety controls for known hazards.
2. New suspected confined spaces (not currently identified in the Department of Administration Confined Space Program) shall be referred to Department of Administration Safety and the FM (and/or appropriate team) Safety Committee for proper confined space classification. Entry to confined spaces prior to determining a classification shall only be conducted using Permit Required Confined Space procedures; planning for such an entry is to include Department of Administration Safety.
3. An appropriate warning sign against unauthorized entry shall be posted on each confined space and the confined space shall be locked, as practical, to prevent unauthorized entry.
4. Entrants must be in frequent regular (every couple of minutes recommended) or constant communication with the outside Attendant(s). At least one Attendant is recommended for entry to confined spaces (that do not require an entry permit). For every Entrant to a Permit Required Confined Space there will be an Attendant (1-to-1 ratio) for purposes of performing rescue by external extraction and providing individual first aid care, as required. Rescue equipment currently available restricts entry to a Permit Required Confined Space to two (2) Entrants.
5. All employees assigned for confined space entry, i.e., those who enter or work in a confined space (Entrants) or serve as Entry Supervisor or Attendant, will receive Confined Space Entry safety training. Department of Administration Safety provides a two part course; both parts are required annually. Part I consists of basic safety awareness training for confined spaces and is available on-line through *the Learning Board*. Part II is an instructor-led hands-on class that focuses on Permit Required Confined Space Entry and Rescue.
6. Every worker involved in confined space entry operations must fully understand their duties, the hazards of the specific confined space, the appropriate safety controls for the identified hazards, and the equipment required before work begins. Confined space entry shall not occur until all team workers' questions are satisfactorily answered by the entry supervisor.
7. Department of Administration must inform contractors during contract negotiations if confined space entry is required and of the specific site's actual and potential hazards prior to entry required to accomplish the work. This includes giving the contractor access to any information available, including historical information such as copies of past entry permits, on the confined spaces involved in their project. Contractors and sources of outside rescue are responsible for training and equipping their own personnel. Details of a joint Department of Administration and contractor confined space entry must be planned and fully coordinated prior to the actual entry.

8. Failure to comply with the Department of Administration Confined Space Policy and Program and OSHA standards will be treated in accordance with the Department of Administration disciplinary policy and procedures.