



SEPTEMBER 2015

## Confined Spaces—When in Doubt, Check It Out!

Workers die in confined spaces every year; primarily from poor ventilation, but also from falls, drowning, entrapment, and explosions. Would-be rescuers often die with their co-workers by going into the same confined space without adequate protection.

A confined space is any space that has limited or restricted means of entry or exit and is not designed for continuous occupancy. Examples of confined spaces include but are not limited to tanks, vessels, utility vaults, underground sewers, electrical vaults, pits, or storage bins.

There are several issues you need to be aware of with respect to confined spaces. A hazardous atmosphere, with poisonous vapors and gases or a lack of oxygen, can cause suffocation. Other hazardous atmospheres, such as an excess of oxygen or the presence of certain gases, vapors, and dust particles, can cause explosions. Maintain an appropriate oxygen level; it should be at least 19.5% but not more than 23.5%. Certain confined spaces such as silos or boilers may contain materials that could engulf a worker. The shape of the confined space may create an entrapment hazard. Workers should also be aware of the potential for falls, drowning hazards, and the presence of snakes, spiders, or rodents that bite.

You need to know the procedures to be used when doing work in confined spaces *before* you go in:

- Be fully trained in confined space entry.
- Know your employer's entry procedures and requirements. Discuss them with your supervisor.
- Test the air frequently for toxic gases and oxygen level. Don't rely on your senses.
- Ventilate the space and be sure to retest before entering, after breaks or leaving the space for any length of time.
- Follow required lockout/tagout procedures for all energy sources.
- Get permission and post all required permits.
- Have a trained attendant nearby who is in constant contact with you and can call for help.
- Use the required PPE for the job.

Take these rules and procedures seriously. Check it out! Make sure that every confined space entry ends with a safe exit.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**If you suspect something is wrong leave the space immediately!**

**NOTES:**

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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S.A.F.E. CARDS\* PLANNED FOR THIS WEEK:

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REVIEWED MSDS #

SUBJECT:

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**MEETING DOCUMENTATION:**

JOB NAME:

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MEETING DATE:

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SUPERVISOR:

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ATTENDEES:

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*These instructions do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations.*



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## Material Safety Data Sheets I

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is designed to provide you with the proper procedures for handling and working with hazardous materials. An MSDS provides information you need to protect yourself, your co-workers, and the environment. Before you work with a new chemical or product, review the necessary MSDSs and make sure you understand them. Employers are required to label hazardous chemicals and make an MSDS available to you for each chemical you may be exposed to at your workplace.

It is important that you know where the MSDSs are located at each jobsite. MSDSs must be readily available to you at your work area in case of an emergency. They may be kept in a binder, in a file, on CD-ROM, on microfiche, or they may be obtained through the Internet. Ask your supervisor if you are not sure where and how to find them. It's also important that you learn how to read MSDSs. They won't be of any help to you if you don't understand what they are telling you. Again, your supervisor is the best person to talk to about training programs and tutorials.

Material Safety Data Sheets are the most comprehensive sources of information about each chemical. MSDSs give the chemical name of the substance, as well as the manufacturer's name, address, and emergency phone number. They provide specific information about each material including exposure limits, required personal protective equipment (PPE), health effects, and fire and explosion hazards. MSDSs also instruct you regarding specific procedures such as proper storage

and disposal, first aid measures, and how to deal with spills and leaks.

MSDSs are often presented in different formats, but you can rely on them to:

- ✓ Be written in English (although they may also be available in other languages).
- ✓ Identify the chemical product and manufacturing/importing company.
- ✓ Describe the chemical's composition, ingredients, physical properties, stability, and reactivity.
- ✓ List potential hazards, toxicity, required PPE, and ecological considerations.
- ✓ List first-aid measures and fire-fighting measures.
- ✓ List instructions on handling, storage, disposal, and transport.
- ✓ Describe possible routes of entry, such as inhalation, ingestion, and skin absorption.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Just because you don't feel any effects from chemical exposure today doesn't mean you're safe.**

**Learn about the materials you use and how they can affect you.**

**NOTES:**

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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## Material Safety Data Sheets II

Do you know what a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is? Have you ever read one? Do you know why they are important? In some ways an MSDS is like a roadmap. Before you start a trip, you check a map to figure out what roads to take, which direction to go and what the territory is like. A map doesn't tell you which neighborhoods are dangerous, when to expect long delays or which intersections are especially hazardous. An MSDS provides a map or a guide to chemical safety. It tells you what precautions to take, what to do or who to call in an emergency and what the hazards are. In fact, an MSDS is better than a map because the MSDS gives you a lot of information about how to avoid the problems and dangers that the chemical presents. It also tells you how to get out of trouble after a problem has occurred.

Each MSDS is divided into sections, and each section contains a different kind of information. Some of that information may not apply to your situation, but you won't know unless you read the entire sheet. Here are some of the kinds of information you may find on an MSDS:

- |                              |  |                            |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| The identity of the chemical | How to deal with a spill               | Environmental concerns     |
| The manufacturer             | Proper storage and handling            | Disposal methods           |
| Hazardous ingredients        | Required PPE                           | Transportation information |
| Possible health effects      | The physical and chemical properties   | Regulatory requirements    |
| First aid measures           | How stable or reactive the chemical is |                            |
| Fire and explosion hazards   | Toxicological information              |                            |

Having an atlas in your house doesn't do you any good when you're lost in the car. Looking at the map but ignoring what it says will not get you to your destination. Just like a map, an MSDS is only useful if you read it and use the information it contains. Always read the MSDS—and make sure you understand it—before you use a chemical, especially if you are using it for the first time. Go back to the MSDS when you have questions about a chemical or anytime you're not quite sure what to do. Your health is in your hands; make sure you act safely and responsibly.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Keep hazardous chemicals out of your body!**  
**Wash thoroughly after handling chemicals and keep chemicals away from food, drinks and tobacco products.**

NOTES:	MEETING DOCUMENTATION:
SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	JOB NAME: _____ MEETING DATE: _____ SUPERVISOR: _____ ATTENDEES: _____ _____ _____ _____
S.A.F.E. CARDS* PLANNED FOR THIS WEEK: _____ _____	_____ _____
REVIEWED MSDS # _____ SUBJECT: _____	_____

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# Weekly Safety Meetings

Safety Training for the Construction Industry  
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Select  
Edition

SEPTEMBER 2015

## Off-the-Job Safety

Every day you encounter reminders of on-the-job safety. There are posters, signs, rules, and regulations displayed around the worksite. The company promotes safety, you participate in safety training, and you attend Weekly Safety Meetings. That's great for on-the-job safety. Today, let's think about safety **off** the job. Take a moment to think of all the things you do after work, on the weekends and holidays, and during your travels to and from the job. There are lots of things to think about; so much to do and not enough time. Now think about the same activities and see if safety plays a part in any of them. Many safety professionals find that it is oftentimes safer **on** the job than off because of the emphasis placed on working safely.

The National Safety Council recognizes June as National Safety Month. The entire month is dedicated to safety. This is an ideal time to sit down and talk about safety with your family. Review or create your emergency evacuation plan. Let your children know how to make their recreational activities safer. Set an example by wearing protective helmets when cycling and life jackets when boating. Keep children away from barbecue grills, hot coals, and propane cylinders. What precautions can you take when swimming and diving?

When working around the house, be sure to take the same precautions you would while on the job. Protect your feet, hands, and eyes when mowing the lawn. Never let your child ride in your lap while operating a mower. Keep children away from power tools. Use the right kind of ladder, set it up correctly, climb properly, and work safely to avoid falls. It's not a short cut if it means you have to finish building your child's tree house after they put in 10 stitches and give you a tetanus booster. **Always** set a safe example for your family.

Summer is a dangerous time to be on America's roadways. Motor vehicle accidents occur during these months more often than any other. Insist that everyone in the vehicle wears a seat belt and keep children in approved child safety devices at all times. If you don't know how to install them properly or just want to make sure, check with your local police or fire department. Many of these agencies will check the installation at no cost.

Take time to plan safety into all your off-the-job activities. One small slip could have tragic consequences.

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**SAFETY REMINDER**  
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**Don't mix alcohol and power tools!**

**NOTES:**

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

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