

### About Tool Box Talks

Please read through this document with each of your staff FACE TO FACE in the form of a Tool Box Talk, encourage interaction on the Discussion points. Each Toolbox talk should take no more than 10 – 15 minutes.

For each Tool Box Talk: a record sheet must be completed containing each employee's signature. Keep the original in your local Tool Box Talk record file and fax or email a copy to the scheme administrator.

### Title: WORKING IN CONFINED SPACES

**A number of people are killed each year in confined spaces. This happens in a wide range of industries, from those involving complex plant to simple storage vessels. Those killed include not only people working in the confined space but those who rescue them without proper training and equipment**

#### Main Points:

- Understanding what is a confined space?
- Understanding the dangers from confined spaces
- Risk assessment
- Avoiding the risk of entering a confined space
- Safe systems of work
- Emergency procedures & rescuers

#### Discussion Points:

- A confined space is an enclosed area where there is a risk of death or serious injury because of dangerous substances or gases
- This may include tanks, silos, vessels, drains etc
- Unventilated or poorly ventilated rooms
- Dangers include: lack of oxygen, poisonous gas or vapour, liquids or solids that may suddenly fill the area, fire or explosion or dust and heat
- Other dangers that are introduced by the work being undertaken include: gas or fume from welding, explosive vapour from solvents and adhesives, dust from grinding
- The law says you must carry out a risk assessment, this must consider and include: the task, the environment, the materials and tools, the training requirements for those carrying out the task and the arrangements for emergency rescue.
- The law also says that your first option is to consider if the work can be done without going into a confined space e.g. could you: do the work from outside using special tools or could a camera be used to do an inspection?
- If you must enter a confined space (CS), look at the risk assessment and the measures to be taken, these will vary from job to job, everyone involved must be properly trained and understand exactly what needs to be done.
- One person must be appointed to supervise the work and check at different stages that the work is proceeding to plan, the supervisor must be present throughout the work.
- The supervisor must make sure that only authorised persons enter the CS; they must be medically fit and of a suitable build and capable of wearing breathing apparatus (BA)
- All electrical and mechanical equipment that may cause danger within the CS must be isolated, the supervisor must be satisfied that the isolation is effective.
- The CS must be cleaned of all residue that may give rise to fume or gas whilst the work is being undertaken
- Check the size of the entrance, is it big enough to allow people into the CS wearing BA + other equipment?
- Will there be adequate ventilation?
- Do you need to test the air at intervals?
- Does lighting need to be rated for use in potentially explosive atmospheres?
- Are BA equipment and safety harnesses required?
- Does everybody know what the alarm sounds like?
- If you are on site check with the client's rep if a permit to work is required, this should ensure that all aspects of your risk assessment, safe system of work and the activities of other workers is taken into account
- The supervisor must remain available outside the CS to provide communication with the emergency services should they be required.

**Gloves and masks may protect individuals  
safe systems of work protect everyone**

know-how makes the difference

**ERIKS**