

# CONFINED SPACE

Thousands of oil and gas workers are exposed each working day to possible death or injury in what are referred to as “confined spaces.”

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard at 29 CFR 1910.146 defines **confined space** as:

- A space that is large enough for an employee to enter,
- Has restricted means of entry or exit, **and**
- Is not designed for continuous employee occupancy.

Some typical confined spaces on oil and gas sites would include:

- Well cellars
- Tanks (enclosed and open), such as drilling mud:
  - Processing tanks
  - Supply tanks
- Hoppers
- Trenches



Although these environments are often dangerous, you might have to work in them to inspect, clean, repair, or maintain equipment. Plus, some of these spaces can be considered to be the more hazardous “permit-required confined spaces.”

A **permit-required confined space** (permit space) is a confined space that presents or has the potential for hazards related to:

- Atmospheric conditions (toxic, flammable, asphyxiating);
- Entanglement;
- Configuration; **or**