

PHYSICS DIVISION

ESH BULLETIN 11-02

Replaces ESH BULLETIN 00-3

CONFINED SPACE

March 21, 2011

A confined space is a space with potential or known hazards AND the space has a size and shape large enough for a person to enter, has limited entrances and exits, and is not designed for people to work in continuously. SBMS subject area [Confined Space](#) defines the processes for identifying, evaluating, and classifying/reclassifying confined spaces, performing permitted and non-permitted confined space entries and emergency operations, and outlines training requirements.

Confined spaces are classified as 'permit-required' or 'non-permit-required':

Permit-required confined spaces must be posted, and requirements for entry include training, evaluation/mitigation of hazards (atmosphere, electrical, thermal, etc), and completion of the [Confined Space Entry Permit](#) (web-based). Permit required confined spaces can be downgraded to non-permit required confined spaces after elimination of all hazards. When this is done, the basis of downgrade must be documented on the Confined Space Entry Permit.

Non-permit-required confined spaces require an evaluation before entry that conditions or potential hazards within the space have not adversely changed from when the space was originally evaluated as a non-permit space.

The Tandem tank is a confined space since it has a limited entrance/exit, is pressurized with an asphyxiant, and is not designed for continuous occupancy. The ORNL Safety Services Division has agreed that, when the Tandem tank is opened, a Confined Space permit is only needed for the initial entry. After the initial entry using a Confined Space permit, the Tandem can be downgraded to a non-permit-required confined space. In addition, Physics has an agreement with the ORNL Safety Services Division that allows division staff to do the oxygen testing prior to initial entry into the Tandem. Testing for flammable and toxic gases is not required since these gases are never present. All other permit-required entries in Physics Division facilities must have all evaluations done, including testing of the ambient atmosphere, and these tests must be conducted by ORNL Safety Services Division personnel.

For further information, contact the [Confined Space](#) subject matter expert.