



CONFINED SPACE HAZARDS

TOOLBOX TALK SERIES – CONFINED SPACE

December 2025

Video Introduction

Today's safety topic begins with a short training video from **AllySafety**:

Title: *"Confined Space Hazards Toolbox Talk"*

Watch here: https://youtu.be/-wrwD7s9rUE?si=mca4TTZBivHGcb_2

This video highlights the hazards presented by confined spaces.

Purpose

Confined spaces exist throughout Town operations—DPW, Sewer, Parks, Facilities, and even some areas of Town Hall and the Community Center. These areas can become deadly in seconds due to limited airflow, hidden atmospheric hazards, and restricted movement. This talk strengthens awareness and reinforces Town procedures for safe entry.

What is a Confined Space?

A confined space has **all three** of the following:

1. **Large enough to enter** and perform work
2. **Limited or restricted means of entry or exit**
3. **Not designed for continuous occupancy**

Examples Around the Town of Perinton

- Sewer manholes
- Stormwater catch basins
- Lift stations
- Meter vaults
- Underground vaults near parks or pump stations
- Tunnels, crawl spaces, mechanical pits
- Storage tanks

Note: Many of these may also qualify as **Permit-Required Confined Spaces** due to atmospheric or physical hazards.



Common Hazards

1. Atmospheric Hazards

- Low oxygen levels
- Toxic gases (H₂S, methane, sewer gases)
- Flammable vapors
- Atmospheric changes due to water intrusion or decaying organic material

2. Physical & Structural Hazards

- Engulfment from water, sludge, or debris
- Tight work areas leading to entrapment
- Falling objects or unstable surfaces
- Poor visibility

3. Mechanical & Electrical Hazards

- Pumps, mixers, or fans that may energize unexpectedly
 - Nearby traffic or heavy equipment
 - Moving water flows in storm or sewer infrastructure
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Essential Safe Work Practices

1. Never Enter Without Authorization

Only trained, designated personnel may perform confined space entry.
If you're not part of the Town's authorized entry team—**do not enter**.

2. Assess Hazards First

- Identify the space and determine if it is a Permit-Required Confined Space.
- Review known hazards, previous testing results, and site history.
- Confirm atmospheric testing is completed with calibrated meters.

3. Atmospheric Testing

Before entry—and continuously during entry—test for:

1. **Oxygen level**



2. **Flammable gases/vapors**
3. **Toxic gases**

Testing must be done from **outside the space first**, then at multiple levels inside.

4. Ventilation

Use mechanical ventilation to purge the space when required.
Never assume natural airflow is enough.

5. Lockout/Tagout (LOTO)

- Shut down pumps, valves, and electrical systems that could activate.
- Isolate all energy sources before anyone enters.
- Follow Town of Perinton LOTO procedures.

6. Use the Proper PPE and Equipment

Depending on the space, this may include:

- Harnesses and retrieval systems
- Tripods or winches
- Gas monitors
- Ventilation blowers
- Communication equipment
- Protective clothing and gloves

7. Maintain Attendant Responsibilities

Every entry requires an **attendant** stationed outside the space who:

- Maintains constant communication
- Monitors atmospheric readings
- Has no other duties
- Initiates emergency procedures if needed
- Never enters the space to perform a rescue

8. Emergency Response

- Only trained rescue teams may perform confined space rescue.
 - Call **911** immediately for any confined-space emergency.
 - Notify **Town of Perinton Safety & Security** and department supervisor.
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Town of Perinton Expectations

- No employee enters a confined space alone or without authorization.
 - All confined space entries must follow Town procedures, training requirements, and permit processes.
 - If the space seems unsafe or conditions change—**STOP and EXIT immediately.**
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Discussion Questions

1. Where do you encounter or work near confined spaces during your daily tasks?
 2. What hazards would you expect to find in stormwater or sewer manholes?
 3. What should you do if someone collapses inside a confined space?
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Key Takeaway

Confined space hazards are often invisible until it's too late. Proper assessment, atmospheric testing, communication, and adherence to Town procedures save lives. **When in doubt—treat every confined space as hazardous unless proven otherwise.**

