Health & Safety Standard

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For interim version details see section 5 Revision history.

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1 Purpose

The Confined Space Entry standard sets the requirements for managing risk associated with performing work in a confined space.

This standard is intended for individuals accountable or responsible for confined space entry work.

2 Application

This standard applies to confined space entries performed at Cenovus entities, except for entries into an inert gas confined space, which shall be managed by specialized contractors with specific skills, procedures, equipment, and rescue plans not addressed in this standard.

3 Requirements

Entities shall identify confined space work and where practicable confined space entry work should be avoided, applying lower risk alternatives.

Workers entering a confined space shall be protected from hazardous energy, toxic substances, flammable atmospheres, oxygen-deficient or oxygen-enriched atmospheres, and hazards that could result in asphyxiation, drowning, engulfment, or entrapment.

Prior to confined space entry, the confined space shall be isolated according to the Energy Isolation Standard and be authorized by a confined space entry permit.

Entities shall create site-specific procedures and processes that meet or exceed this standard.

Where the requirements of this standard conflict with the requirements of local, federal, or other regulatory bodies the most stringent requirement shall apply.

3.1 Access and egress

A confined space entry begins when any part of the entrant's or worker's body breaks the plane of an opening into the space.

The entity shall control access to a confined space.

All entry points shall be visually identified to prevent unauthorized access.

The confined space shall have a safe and clear means of access and egress for workers and rescue personnel.

Workers in a confined space shall be monitored by a Safety Watch. The safety watch shall:

- be a person posted outside the confined space or in conjunction with a confined space remote monitoring system.
- log workers entering and leaving the confined space

- prevent unauthorized personnel from entering the confined space
- maintain communication with workers inside the confined space
- monitor the safety and well being of workers in the confined space
- perform atmospheric monitoring as practicable from outside of the confined space
- sound an alarm in an emergency
- not enter the confined space nor attempt a rescue
- remain capable of continuously monitoring workers in the confined space and initiating evacuation when conditions change, alarms activate, communication is lost, or any unsafe condition is observed
- not perform additional duties that interfere with monitoring workers, controlling access, maintaining communication, or summoning rescue

3.2 Confined space atmosphere

Atmospheric testing shall be conducted prior to entry, and continuously when workers are within the confined space.

While workers are present in a confined space for any purpose other than to perform a rescue, the atmosphere in the confined space:

- should have an oxygen content of 20.9% and shall not be greater than 23.5%
- should not have any flammable gases and shall not have a flammable gas concentration greater than 20% of lower explosive limit

The confined space shall be continuously ventilated with fresh air while a worker is inside the space.

Atmospheric testing shall be performed according to applicable procedures. Atmospheric testing equipment shall be:

- function tested prior to use
- used according to its design

Where nitrogen or another inert gas is used for purging, inerting, clearing, or equipment preparation, the work area, discharge points, adjacent areas, and low-lying areas shall be assessed for potential oxygen-deficient atmospheres. Controls such as atmospheric monitoring, ventilation, exclusion zones, barricades, and warning signage shall be established as necessary to prevent worker exposure and unauthorized access.

3.3 Equipment

All equipment used in confined space entry shall be inspected and confirmed to be in good working order prior to entry into the confined space.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be selected and worn based on the hazards identified for confined space entry, including atmospheric testing results, applicable Safety Data Sheets (SDS), and in compliance with the Industrial Hygiene Standard.

All electrical equipment used with a confined space shall be equipped with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).

Compressed gas cylinders are not permitted inside a confined space except for breathing air, firefighting, and medical resuscitation.

Rescue equipment shall be selected based on the confined space hazard assessment, atmospheric conditions, work activities, and the documented rescue plan. This may include retrieval systems, lifelines, harnesses, respiratory protection, emergency escape equipment, communication equipment, lighting, electrical equipment, and tools.

3.4 Confined space rescue

A worker shall not enter or remain in a confined space unless an effective rescue can be carried out.

A documented rescue plan shall be prepared for the specific confined space and entry task before entry begins. The plan shall identify the rescue method, retrieval approach, communication method, rescue equipment, required PPE or respiratory protection, rescue team availability, and expected response capability.

Before authorizing entry, the entity shall verify that rescue can be performed effectively for the entry configuration, hazards, and work location. Non-entry rescue shall be used where practicable.

Members of confined space rescue teams shall:

- ensure a documented rescue plan has been reviewed and is present at the site of the confined space entry
- ensure rescue equipment has been inspected and is readily available to perform an effective rescue
- participate in at least one confined space rescue drill annually

Confined space rescue shall be limited to the following atmospheric conditions:

- oxygen concentration less than 23.5%
- flammable gases less than 40% of their lower explosive limit

3.5 Training

Workers shall be trained and competent to perform their assigned role in the authorization, preparation, execution, monitoring, testing, inspection, supervision, or rescue of confined space entry work.

Role-specific training and competency requirements shall be established, as applicable, for entrants, Safety Watch personnel, issuing authorities, entry supervisors, atmospheric testers, workers controlling hazardous energy or harmful substances, workers assigned to inspect or test personal protective equipment (PPE), retrieval systems, respiratory protection, rescue equipment, or other equipment used for confined space entry, and confined space rescue personnel.

Training records shall be retained in accordance with entity requirements and applicable regulatory requirements.

4 References

Table 1: Internal governing references

Document title or link	Relevance
COIMS Framework	Element 9 - Safe control of work – COIMS-00001
Safe Control of Work Standard	COIMS Standard – COIMS-00006
Energy Isolation Standard	COIMS Standard – COIMS-000008
Industrial Hygiene Standard	COIMS Standard – COIMS-0003-000008
COIMS Element 9 – Safe control of work	SharePoint Site
Life Saving Rules	SharePoint Site

Table 2: External references

Document title or link	Relevance
OSHA 1910.146	Permit-required confined spaces
Alberta OH&S	OH&S code part 5
WorkSafe BC	OHS Regulation Part 9
Saskatchewan OHS	OHS Regulation Part 18
Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health	Workplace Safety and Health Act Part 15

5 Revision history

Table 3: Revision history

Version	Date	Description
1.00	May 2, 2023	Issued for use
1.10	October 13, 2026	Edited to reflect feedback by field users. Added internal and external references, as well as statements in 3.1 and 3.2 to address nitrogen hazards.