

Working with Confined Spaces

Hazards of the job

Many construction sites have enclosed areas where work is done. These areas can be dangerous and have hazards that could kill or injure workers or even would-be rescuers. Here are some of the dangers workers face in confined spaces:

- Lack of oxygen
- Explosive or toxic gases
- Electrical shock
- Items falling from above

Watching from above

If you are an attendant watching over a confined space, your duty is to observe and assist from above. If the worker in the confined spaces becomes non-responsive, you should never attempt a rescue on your own, unless you have a tag line on the person and can pull them out without going into the enclosed area. Only workers who have been trained in rescue procedures, and have the proper rescue equipment, should attempt to enter the area. This should also only be done with another attendant watching. You do not know why the first worker became non-responsive, and simply jumping in to save them, could cost both your lives.

Preventing injuries

- You should treat all confined spaces as hazardous.
- Test for oxygen and dangerous gases or chemicals before entering any confined space.
- Make sure that the structure you are entering is safe and stable before you go in.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Make sure that you have a dependable way to communicate with your fellow workers when working in the confined space.
- If an unsafe condition develops while you're inside the confined space, get out immediately.
- Set up and execute realistic practice drills involving confined space work and rescues.

For more information and additional risk management and prevention tools, visit: [fwcruminsurance.com](https://www.fwcruminsurance.com)