

How do I know if I am in a confined space?

Never enter a confined space if you don't know what is in it and what precautions to take.

Get trained: Anyone involved in confined space entries must be trained and authorized.

Evaluate: All confined spaces at Northwestern have been initially assessed; these assessments are available to you and contractors by contacting Risk Management Services. Review the assessment prior to conducting any work in a confined space and evaluate the space to identify and control hazards. Remember that the work being performed, such as hot work, may introduce new hazards that need to be controlled.

Always verify the atmosphere is safe with a calibrated air testing device prior to entry.

Communicate: The entrant and attendant should maintain effective communication in the event of an emergency. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, such as verbally, visually, or by portable radio.

Don't be a rescuer: According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), 60% of all confined space fatalities occur among would-be rescuers who end up becoming victims themselves. In some disasters, more rescuers die than original victims. **Northwestern employees are not permitted to enter a confined space to perform a rescue under any circumstances!** Rescue may be performed using non-entry equipment, such as a tripod, winch, and body harness, or by trained rescue professionals.

Exit immediately: If you suspect danger, exit the confined space immediately!

Don't forget: Complete confined space training at learn.northwestern.edu. If your work involves confined spaces, talk to your supervisor or contact Risk Management Services to sign up for the comprehensive confined space courses offered on campus.

How do I stay safe at home?

Do you have a confined space? An attic or crawl space in your home could be considered a confined space. Accumulation of dangerous gases, extreme temperatures, trapping internal configurations, and other hazards could potentially be present. Here are some tips to stay safe at home:

- Always ventilate a confined space prior to entry by opening it up and airing it out; a portable fan is an effective way to ensure adequate ventilation
- Avoid storing chemicals or substances that could produce a hazardous atmosphere in attics or crawl spaces
- Always let someone know you are entering an attic or crawl space; if possible, have someone standby at the entry point in case of an emergency
- Always latch or lock access points to attics and crawl spaces to prohibit others, especially children, from entering
- Never smoke in an attic or crawl space; flammable gases or vapors may be present

For additional information

Please contact [Gwen Butler](mailto:Gwen.Butler@northwestern.edu), Director of Environmental Health and Safety, at 847.491.4936.

How do I stay safe in a confined space?

Know the space: Keep the topic relevant to your work. With your team, review the different types of confined spaces in your workplace and discuss the potential hazards and control methods to stay safe when entry is necessary to perform work.

Keep the focus on what can be done to create a safe workplace, instead of focusing on what has gone wrong in the past

Additional information: www.northwestern.edu/rms; 4.537.67022(4.537.67eLang (en-US)/MCID 144 BDC BT8 0 4k v(wr 0 4k v(w.2702 Tm(4.537.4EEMC /Span 4Lang (en-US