



EHS Bulletin

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Six Emergency-Response Habits All Need to Develop

Training on the types of emergencies that could happen at or around the work area and roles during emergencies are essential first steps in preparing for response. Employees need refresher training and regular drills so they will be able to rely on both their knowledge and experience when emergencies happen. Each employee needs to specifically know what they are expected to do during different types of emergencies.

Here are a few of the basic emergency response habits every employee can develop:

- 1. Exit Routes:** Everyone should know where the exit routes are and where the closest exit is. Evacuation drills allow employees to practice using multiple exit routes so they are less likely to panic if they are not able to use their primary route. Employees should also know where to go and who to check in with after they have evacuated. <https://ehs.okstate.edu/fire-drills.html>
- 2. Fire Extinguishers:** Fire extinguisher training help employees remember to pull, aim, squeeze, and sweep. These drills should also include instruction on exiting the building if they have exhausted an extinguisher but have failed to put out the fire. EHS offers fire safety training that includes hands-on practice with the BullsEye laser training device. Classes take place the 2nd Friday of each month. For more information visit <https://ehs.okstate.edu/class-list.html>.
- 3. Chemical Splashes:** Chemical labels provide basic information about a chemical's hazard(s); but when an employee has been splashed or unsafely exposed to a hazardous chemical, the safety data sheet (SDS) can provide more details to better help the affected employee. Every employee should know how to locate their laboratory's SDS and how to quickly find the one that is needed.
- 4. Eyewash Stations, Drench Hoses, and Safety Showers:** Knowing how to get to safety equipment quickly can mean the difference between a first aid incident and a major injury. Each employee should know how to quickly get to the safety equipment in their work area.
- 5. Spill Response:** When a spill creates an unsafe atmosphere or threatens the health of employees, it is most likely an "emergency spill" and needs to be cleaned up by someone who has been trained to OSHA's Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard. All employees need to be taught how to quickly determine whether they are capable of cleaning up a spill or need to call in EHS. Volume, location, chemical properties, and levels of training all need to be taken into consideration when training employees how to determine whether a spill is an emergency. <https://ehs.okstate.edu/spill-response.html>
- 6. Injury Response and Reporting:** Every employee should know what to do when someone is injured. At a minimum, they should know whom to report an injury to, and what will be done to investigate the root cause of the incident. Even basic skills such as being able to retrieve the first aid kit or AED, or being able to meet the ambulance at the door and show them to an injured employee, are helpful. <https://ehs.okstate.edu/accidents-injuries.html>

Confined Space Entry

What is a Confined Space?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has created a special set of rules for confined spaces, which often pose special hazards to workers. EHS and Facilities Management are working together to identify and catalogue the many confined spaces that exist at OSU. You may have already noticed some entrances around campus marked with confined space signs. Confined spaces may or may not contain specific hazards like toxic atmospheres and electrical hazards, but to be considered a confined space by OSHA, they must meet all three of the following criteria:

1. Must be large enough for a worker to enter
2. Must have limited means for entry and exit
3. Are not designed for continuous occupancy

OSHA Requirements

OSHA recognized that many fatalities occur in spaces that limit the ability of a worker to exit, or inhibit rescue workers from entering. Small openings, steep stairs, and low ceilings can all restrict entry and exit. OSHA mandates that confined spaces be identified and access to them restricted to prevent unauthorized entry. Examples of confined spaces on the Stillwater campus include steam tunnels, many attics, and some mechanical rooms. There does not have to be any particular hazard present for a space to meet the criteria, but hazards in a confined space are especially deadly and must be handled carefully.

Who can enter a confined space?

OSU employees or contractors that need to enter a space that meets the three criteria above must be authorized to do so, even if that space has not yet been labeled. Only properly trained and equipped personnel may enter confined spaces by following specific procedures. EHS has created a confined space entry program that should be reviewed and followed before entering any confined space on OSU property (<https://ehs.okstate.edu/confined-spaces.html>).

Do I need a permit?

Yes! A common misconception is that there are two types of confined spaces depending on the hazards inside. In fact, all confined spaces are considered permit-required until proven otherwise. A confined space may be temporarily reclassified as non-permit-required if all potential hazards are eliminated, but reverts back to permit-required when the work ends. Temporary reclassification actually requires filling out permits! The differences between the two types of entry are more relative to reducing the number of people required than reducing paperwork.

How can EHS help?

Departments may contact EHS at 405-744-7241 or ohsp@okstate.edu regarding confined spaces. We can also assist you with hazard recognition, recommendations of controls and documenting your findings.

Current Events

Bloodborne Pathogen Training

2nd Monday of the month, 9-10 am or 2-3 pm

EHS Conference Room, 003UHS

Required annually for members under OSHA's standard.

Registration: Email name to chemicalsafety@okstate.edu

Respiratory Protection

1st Tuesday of the month, 8:30-9:30 am

FM North Building, Room 101c

Required annually for members who wear respiratory protection.

Registration: Email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

Fire Safety w/ Hands-on Extinguisher Training

2nd Friday of the month, 9:00-10:00 am

EHS Conference Room, 003UHS

Come join us for fire safety education featuring the BullsEye laser training device.

Registration: Email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

Monthly Employee Training

3rd Thursday of the month, 9:30-11:30 am

EHS Conference Room, 003UHS

Topics: Hazcom; Fire Safety; Slips, Trips, and Falls; Office Safety; and Back Safety

Registration: Email name to ohsp@okstate.edu