

Guidance for temporarily reclassifying permit required confined spaces

In some cases, permit-required confined spaces can be reclassified as non-permit spaces. In order to classify a non-permit space, make sure the confined space meets the following requirements:

- Any hazards capable of causing death or serious physical harm have been eliminated. This includes any recognized health or safety hazards including engulfment in solid or liquid material, electrical shock or moving parts.
- If someone must enter the space to remove hazards, the space must be treated as a permit-required confined space until hazards have been eliminated.
- The confined space can be classified as a non-permit space only for as long as all the hazards remain eliminated.
- There is no actual or potential hazardous atmosphere in the confined space.

Note: Controlling atmospheric hazards through forced air ventilation does not eliminate the hazards.

The following examples below could be reclassified as non-permit spaces:

Hazard	Elimination Okay to reclassify	Control Not allowed to reclassify
Inwardly converging walls, sloped floor or an internal configuration that could trap entrants.	Use of temporary floor that is secured and designed to carry the anticipated load of entrants, equipment and rescuers.	Use of a harness and lifeline.
Heat stress.	Allow sufficient cool-down time before entering space. For example: boilers and ovens.	Use of ventilation, frequent breaks outside of space, personal protective equipment.
Electrical hazard or any other form of hazardous energy.	Lockout/Tagout of energy sources prior to entry.	Lockout/Tagout of energy sources after entering space or other control that does not eliminate the hazard before entry.
Fall hazard (> 4 feet).	Use of a secured temporary floor.	Use of a harness and lifeline.

If hazards in a confined space can be temporarily eliminated, use the Certificate of Confined Space Hazard Elimination Form.

If hazards can be permanently eliminated from a confined space, and the space can be reclassified as non-permit required, contact EHS to complete a Confined Space Evaluation.