



# Safety Alert



**INCIDENT TITLE:** EVE-0001278 Working in a confined space without any confined space entry controls

**TIME AND DATE OF INCIDENT:**  
**July 2024**

## INCIDENT DETAIL :

While inspecting the new barge ramp and associated unloading process at West Arm I noticed somebody climb into an open hatch on the port side at the bow of the barge. After the first vehicle was unloaded, I walked over to check what I had seen. A contractor was inside one of the floating barge pontoons drilling some mounting holes for an electrical panel.

### **What are the risks?**

Many confined spaces contain hazardous substances or dangerous conditions that could include:

**Poor Air Quality** – Atmospheres with oxygen content less than 19.5% (deficient) or more than 23.5% (enriched) are not safe.

**Toxic Gases** – Hydrogen sulphide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, smoke, ammonia, chlorine, and argon are all potentially deadly. Rust depletes oxygen in ship hulls or barges.

**Flammable Atmospheres** – A highly explosive atmosphere can be created when finely ground combustible materials such as grain, carbon, fibres, plastics or flammable liquids are present.

**Loose materials that may engulf or smother** – shifting or collapse of bulk material, barrier failures.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

A confined space:

is an enclosed or partially enclosed space and is not intended or designed primarily for human occupancy and, may present a risk from one or more of the following at any time:

- unsafe concentration of harmful airborne contaminants
- unsafe concentration of flammable substances
- unsafe levels of oxygen
- substances that can cause engulfment.

Examples include: storage tanks, tank cars, process vessels, boilers, silos, pits, pipes, sewers, shafts, ducts and shipboard spaces.

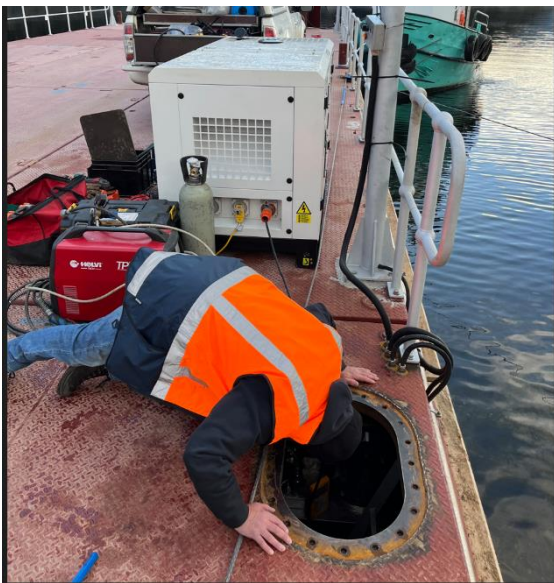
## BEST PRACTICE:

Follow WorkSafe NZ Guidelines for entering a Confined space  
If unsure use the worksheet attached as a guideline  
If still unsure, ask for expert advice  
Rather be Safe than Sorry

**Always plan a Confined Space entry.**

**Never go into a Confined Space as a lone worker.**

## PHOTO



## IMMEDIATE INTERIM ACTIONS:

Stopped the work, advised contractor that they were working in a confined space and advised work party supervisor via a phone call.

Took the contractor up to the control block and arranged some support to properly plan out the work, put controls in place and get rescue gear/equipment on hand to resume work the following day.

**THIS SAFETY ALERT HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**  
**Steve Herbst 021 227 0059 or [steve.herbst@meridianenergy.co.nz](mailto:steve.herbst@meridianenergy.co.nz)**