

In 2007, Argonne performed an independent assessment of its confined space entry program.

Two assessors spent nearly a month reviewing program documentation and field activities, interviewed employees and supervisors and touring various confined space locations.

The assessment report concluded that there were programmatic issues related primarily to documentation of hazard evaluations and work procedures, and retention of completed entry permits.

The assessment also concluded that documentation of training course development did not comply with current Argonne requirements.

The assessors also concluded that the mistakes in document handling were attributable to issues of training retention.

Argonne's corrective actions included

- rewriting the ES&H Manual Section on confined space entry;
- revising the space inventory evaluation form
- re-inventorying and labeling all spaces; and
- retraining all confined space entrants, attendants and supervisors.

Although the OSHA standard does not specify a specific interval for training, Argonne opted to require retraining every three years or more often if conditions require. To date 282 employees have received retraining.

In planning the retraining effort, we recognized that case studies often are useful for engaging people in the training process. We had thought to use examples culled from the NIOSH publication, *Worker Deaths in Confined Spaces*.

However, in early November 2007, just before retraining was to begin, a quadruple fatality occurred in Superior, Wisconsin. The EQO Training group, using online newspaper accounts, was able to produce a brief video that we use at the beginning of the refresher training.

We have found that this unfortunate event has served to focus our students' attention on the need for thorough confined space entry planning, training, and procedures as well as diligent application of entry procedures and permits.

We begin with an aerial view of the work place, Lakehead Blacktop Materials land fill. We show this photo, which we got from Google Maps, with out comment and ask if anyone knows what this might be a picture of. It is the land fill facility where four men died in a confined space accident. [click for oval] Then a close-up. Then we show this video, which uses newspaper accounts and photos, to describe what is know about what happens.

As the rest of the training unfolds, we refer to the accident to discuss topics from confined space and permit-required confined space definitions to hazard evaluation, air monitoring, rescue equipment, permits etc.

Fortunately, there has never been a confined space incident at Argonne. So we don't have a local case study to use in the class. However, this real world event, and our training groups technical expertise have combined to create an effective focus for our confined space retraining effort.

If you want to learn more about this, contact Ralph Hinterman, 630-252-2881, [hint@anl.gov](mailto:hint@anl.gov).



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# ***Confined Space Retraining***

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June 4, 2008



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