



HAZARD ALERT

Confined Spaces - Winery Vessels

Work at a winery can expose individuals to life-threatening situations. When cleaning or emptying tanks, and checking the fermentation process, employees are sometimes directed to bodily enter a tank or place their head inside a tank. The air inside a tank or vat may not be sufficient to support life when gases such as carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide have displaced oxygen. If the air is not tested prior to exposure, the result can be deadly.

Oregon OSHA inspections have revealed serious deficiencies in some of the procedures used in tank entry. Exposure to gases produced in the process of wine making can be deadly and the practice of using fans to purge the air inside a tank prior to entry is often not enough. Testing must be done to determine safe atmosphere levels. The use of a meter to test oxygen and toxic gases, such as carbon dioxide, is among approved methods.

Note: Odor and other sensations are not good indicators of dangers that may be present. A common misconception is that gases associated with the process of wine making can be detected by a specific odor. Some common gases, such as carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, are odorless.

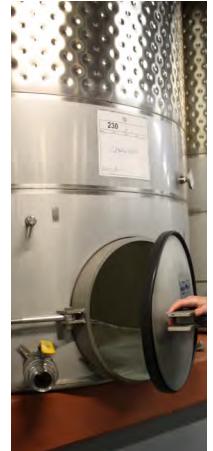
When tanks, vats, or other vessels are present in the workplace, you must determine which confined space procedures apply. Generally, all winery tanks are permit-required confined spaces. In order to meet administrative requirements, employers are required to:

- Evaluate the work environment for confined spaces
- Identify hazards to employees
- Develop written procedures to protect employees from those hazards
- Train employees in the procedures established

Oregon OSHA's consultation program can help you assess your current program or create and implement a program for your workplace.

Oregon OSHA's consultative services are free, confidential and available to all Oregon employers. Call if you have questions or to schedule a consultation:

- Portland, 503-229-6193
- Eugene, 541-686-7913
- Medford, 541-776-6016
- Salem, 503-373-7819
- Bend, 541-388-6068
- Pendleton, 541-276-2353



Resources

Confined space rules are located on the Oregon OSHA website at www.orsosha.org. If you have questions, call 800-922-2689 and ask to speak to a technical specialist.

Links

[437-002-0146, Confined Spaces rule](#)

Fact sheet: [Confined Spaces](#)

Publication: [Confined Spaces and Permit Spaces](#)

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Oregon OSHA
www.orsosha.org
800-922-2689

Hazard alerts provide information on hazardous materials, equipment, or practices. For more information contact the Oregon OSHA Standard and Technical Resources Section at 503-378-3272, toll-free at 800-922-2689, or visit our website at www.orsosha.org.