

Guidance: 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:

- There is no actual or potential hazardous atmosphere in the confined space.
- 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.
- The confined space can be classified as a non-permit space only for as long as all the hazards remain eliminated.
- 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.

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

Examples of spaces that could be reclassified as non-permit spaces		
Hazard	Elimination (OK 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 (ex. boilers, ovens)	Use of ventilation, frequent breaks outside of space, personal protective equipment
Electrical hazards (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 present in a confined space can be temporarily eliminated, then you can use the [Hazard Elimination Certificate](#). If the hazards can be permanently eliminated from a confined space, and the space can be reclassified as non-permit required, contact EH&S at ehsdept@uw.edu or (206) 543-0465 to complete a confined space evaluation form.