



**VOSH PROGRAM DIRECTIVE: 02-062A**

**ISSUED: April 1, 2003**

**SUBJECT: Application of the Permit-Required Confined Spaces (PRCS) Standards, §1910.146**

**A. Purpose.**

This directive establishes enforcement policy and provides explanation of the standard to ensure uniform enforcement.

*This program directive is an internal guideline, not a statutory or regulatory rule, and is intended to provide instructions to VOSH personnel regarding internal operation of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Program and is solely for the benefit of the program. This document is not subject to the Virginia Register Act or the Administrative Process Act; it does not have general application and is not being enforced as having the force of law.*

**B. Scope.**

This Program Directive applies to all VOSH personnel.

**C. Reference.**

OSHA Instruction CPL 2.100 (May 5, 1995)

**Please Note:** Non-mandatory appendices from the superceded VOSH Program Directive (02-062) pertaining to procedures for Atmospheric Testing, Confined Space Pre-entry Check List, Sewer entry, etc., were transferred to VOSH Program Directive 12-124B, Amendment to Permit-Required Confined Spaces Standard for General Industry, §1910.146, because these appendices are not included in CPL 2.100.

**D. Cancellation.**

VOSH Program Directive 02-062 (Sept. 15, 1993)

**E. Action**

Directors and Managers shall ensure that field personnel understand and comply with the provisions of this directive.

**F. Effective Date**

April 1, 2003

**G. Expiration Date**

Not Applicable.

**H. Background**

On March 23, 1987, the Safety and Health Codes Board (“Board”) adopted a unique Virginia standard which would regulate entry into confined spaces in general industry and construction industry, as well as in the telecommunications industry. During the same meeting, the Board decided to split the proposed standard into two separate standards - one for General Industry and the Construction Industry and the other for the Telecommunications Industry. The decision to divide the Confined Space Standard resulted from written and oral comments received during the sixty-day comment period and public hearing held.

On June 29, 1987, amendments to the standards for the construction and telecommunications industries were adopted by the Board.

On June 21, 1993, the Board adopted the federal-identical Permit-Required Confined Spaces Standard, §1910.146 (58 FR 4462, January 14, 1993), which addresses confined space hazards in general industry only.

As a result, the former Virginia Confined Space Standard for General and Construction Industries was revised by removing references to the Virginia Confined Space Standard for General Industry, and renamed the “Virginia Confined Space Standard for the Construction Industry, § CNSP.146.” It, along with the aforementioned Confined Space Standard for the Telecommunications Industry, § CNSP. 268, remain applicable to the construction and telecommunications industries.

**I. Summary**

The federal OSHA Standard for Confined Space in General Industry, § 1910.146, states that the standard for Confined Spaces is “any space that is large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work, that has limited or restricted means for entry or exit, and is *not* designed for continuous employee occupancy.” (This does not apply to agriculture, construction or shipyard employment.)

**J. Procedures**

The following comprises the general practices and procedures for entry into and work inside a confined space in general industry:

1. The employer must implement a written entry permit system;
2. The employer must train each employee on the hazards of working in a confined space before the employee is authorized to enter it and records of such a training program must be maintained;

3. Atmospheric testing must be conducted for oxygen levels, flammability and toxic materials that are expected to be present;
4. All confined spaces must be flushed or emptied of all dangerous substances to the extent feasible, and, in the case of a hazardous atmosphere, adequate ventilation must be provided;
5. Electrical and mechanical hazards must be removed or prevented from causing a hazardous situation;
6. When necessary, an attendant shall be stationed immediately outside every confined space (a non-attendant entry is permitted in many cases);
7. The employee entering a confined space with a hazardous atmosphere must be provided with an appropriate retrieval device with a retrieval line and an appropriate respirator; and
8. Confined Space entry work that occurs on a public thoroughfare must be done in accordance with requirements in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices of Streets and Highways.

Unless specifically stated otherwise in the citation guidelines, all alleged violations shall be normally cited as “serious” and the compliance officer shall document the rationale for the selection of any other level of violation.

*C. Ray Davenport*  
Commissioner

Attachment: OSHA Instruction CPL 2.100, May 5, 1995, or refer to:

[http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=DIRECTIVES&p\\_id=1582  
&p\\_text\\_version=FALSE](http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=DIRECTIVES&p_id=1582&p_text_version=FALSE)

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