*This model program is intended for general information purposes only. It should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion regarding any specific or factual situation. Always follow your organization’s policies and procedures as presented by your manager or supervisor.*

**Fire Department Confined Space Operations Model Policy**

**Objective:**

Name of Agency establishes this policy to direct the operations at confined space incidents, including calls for confined space rescues.

**Scope:**

All firefighters and officers of name of agency

**Responsibilities:**

The Chief of the Department shall have ultimate responsibility for ensuring this policy adheres to OSHA and PEOSH Confined Space regulations.

**Definitions**:

*Confined Space*: A confined space is any area, space, or vessel, which meets all 3 of the following conditions:

1. Is large enough and so configured that an employee can enter and perform work
2. Has limited means of entry or exit
3. Is not designed for continuous occupancy

*Permit Required Confined Space*: A permit required confined space is defined as *Confined Space* (above) which has any one or more of the following conditions:

1. Contains or has a potential to contain a hazardous atmosphere
2. Contains a material with potential for engulfment
3. Is so structured that an entrant could become trapped or asphyxiated
4. Contains any other recognized serious safety or health hazard – i.e. moving parts, noise

*Recovery mode*: Recovery mode is defined as situations where the victim is obviously expired or after a period of time during the rescue operation where time, conditions, or other factors have reduced the chance for the victim’s survival to minimal.

*Rescue mode*: Rescue mode is defined as situations where the victim is believed or known to be alive. If this is unknown, personnel should operate in the rescue mode until time, conditions, or other elements make the chance for survival minimal.

**Response Procedures**:

Confined space rescue operations present a significant danger to fire department and emergency medical personnel. The safe and effective management of these operations requires special considerations and resources.

Examples of possible confined spaces include tunnels, sewers, tanks, process vessels, manholes, storm drains, furnaces, silos, and industrial spaces.

The name of agency functions at the AWARENESS level. Therefore it is the policy of the name of agency that personnel SHALL NOT enter into a confined space. Entry is defined as breaking the plane of the opening to the confined space.

Examples of activities and functions appropriate at the AWARENESS level include:

* Recognition of a confined space incident
* Recognition of confined space hazards
* Performing a non-entry retrieval
* Identifying resource needs
* Initiating response of operations and/or technician level personnel
* Establishing scene control and management

**Command responsibilities:**

The first member arriving at the emergency scene will assume command and will remain in charge until relieved.

The fire ground operation radio channel will be assigned by Command.

Upon arrival, Command will quickly assess the situation and give a brief radio report to the responding units. Command shall:

1. Secure any witnesses
2. Obtain the confined space entry permit and any other available information
3. Determine location, number, condition of victims, and length of time in confined space
4. Identify utility and other scene hazards – i.e. hazardous materials, low oxygen levels
5. Determine the type of work being performed in the confined space
6. Determine the type of PPE being used by victim(s)
7. Make a determination of rescue or recovery mode
8. Request additional resources needed

First arriving engine or truck shall:

1. Establish hot, warm, and cold zones (utilize barrier tape and natural boundaries) as ordered by Command
2. Ensure that unauthorized/untrained personnel do not enter the confined space
3. Confirm or implement lock out/tag out
4. If victim is attached to a body harness and retrieval line, the rescuers may lift the victim from the confined space area
5. Attempt to establish contact with victim(s)
6. Establish atmospheric monitoring
7. Establish ventilation of confined space after atmospheric monitoring
8. If safe to do so and if it can be accomplished from outside the confined space, shutdown non-essential equipment that is located within the confined space
9. Establish staging area for additional arriving apparatus and personnel

Emergency medical services shall:

1. Triage and treat any accessible victims and transport if necessary
2. Set up to receive additional victims
3. Establish Firefighter rehab

Additional Manpower shall:

1. Assist as needed by order of Command