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Subject: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: VIRTUAL TOOLBOX TALK: - Confined Spaces & Ventilation - To Cleaning & Property Services Colleagues

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: VIRTUAL TOOLBOX TALK: Ladder Safety - To McSence Contractors | Cleaning & Property Services Colleagues

Good Morning,

Hope you are well and reason you have received this email virtual toolbox talk is to increase your awareness of **Confined Spaces & Ventilation**.

Purpose / objectives: This virtual toolbox talk is to increase colleagues' awareness of Confined Spaces & Ventilation and guidance on the steps you need to take protect yourself/others.

Company Policy: Please click on these links for the company Health & Safety Policy, HSE information on Confined Spaces & Ventilation:

[Health-Safety-Policy.pdf \(mcsence.co.uk\)](#)

[Working in confined spaces: introduction - HSE](#)

[Overview - Ventilation in the workplace \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

Confined Space: Confined workspaces are especially dangerous due to limited access, and they have poor ventilation. The words "confined space" sounds small, but they could be big. Examples include tanks, access shafts, utility vaults, sewers, pipes, truck or rail tank cars, boilers, manholes, silos, and storage bins. This is a must-do topic if people are working in confined spaces at your site. A confined space is one which is both enclosed or largely enclosed and has a reasonably foreseeable specified risk to workers of:

- fire
- explosion
- loss of consciousness
- asphyxiation
- drowning

Hazards: Working in a confined space is dangerous because of the risks from noxious fumes, reduced oxygen levels, or a risk of fire. Other dangers may include flooding, drowning or asphyxiation from some other source such as dust, grain, or other contaminant.

What you have to do?

Wherever possible, you should avoid carrying out tasks in confined spaces. If this is not possible, you must assess the risks of the particular confined space and plan how you will control those risks. For example, if a confined space has harmful fumes, you should consider how these can be ventilated or removed there is a risk of liquids or gases flooding in, you should establish whether the valves can be locked shut someone is going into a confined space and there is not enough oxygen to breathe properly, you must provide breathing apparatus or ventilate the space to increase oxygen levels before entering. You should have emergency arrangements where necessary.

If someone is working in a confined space, think about how will you know they are okay and have not been overcome by fumes? how will you get them out if they are overcome - It's not enough to rely on the emergency services?

Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)

- Check the labels on the chemicals and ensure you are using them according to the instruction(s).
- Check the COSHH folder on Staffzone with link or on-site folders for more information.
- Use the laundry sinks instead or fill bucket with water in the cupboard.
- Mix the chemicals on the outside of confined spaces or in the open plus ensure you use wet floor signs.
- Do NOT mix chemicals in the cupboards or confined spaces.
- When in the confined spaces leave the door open but ensure it is closed when you leave.
- Ensure you use/wear your PPE – masks, gloves etc.

Do..

- ✓ **be aware of the risks that may occur within a confined space.**
- ✓ **make sure the person doing the work is capable and trained in both the work and the use of any emergency equipment.**

Do not..

- × **work in confined spaces unless it's essential to do so.**
- × **ignore the risks – just because a confined space is safe one day does not mean it will always be.**
- × **let others enter a confined space until you are sure it's safe to do so**

Ventilation: Employers must make sure there is adequate ventilation in enclosed areas of their workplace. Ventilation is the process of bringing in fresh air from outside and removing indoor air, which may:

- be stale.
- be hot and humid because of work machinery and processes.
- contain pollutants and other impurities.

This virtual toolbox talk will help you:

- assess your workplace to identify poorly ventilated areas.
- decide on the actions you can take to improve ventilation.

Why ventilation is important? Not only is it the law to provide sufficient fresh air, but studies have shown that good ventilation is associated with:

- improved health.
- better concentration.
- higher levels of satisfaction with an environment.
- lower rates of absence from work.
- better quality of sleep.
- reduced exposure to a wide range of air pollutants.

Methods of ventilation: The method of ventilation will depend on the building, and you will need to decide which options work best for your workplace.

- × Natural ventilation relies on doors, windows, and other openings such as trickle vents, air bricks or grilles to provide air.
- × Mechanical ventilation uses fans to move air into and out of rooms. In small spaces and buildings these may be in the room, but larger buildings may use a network of ducts and fans to blow clean air into rooms and/or extract the stale air. Many buildings have a mixture of natural and mechanical ventilation, with either (or both) systems in different spaces.

Keeping a comfortable temperature: Businesses must ensure workplace temperatures are reasonable. Workers should not be exposed to uncomfortable draughts. For mechanical ventilation systems, it may be necessary to control the direction or speed of airflow. Workstations should be moved or screened if necessary. If your space is naturally ventilated, there are simple

steps you can take to make sure your workplace has enough fresh air without opening windows wide and making it too cold:

- partially opening windows and doors can still provide adequate ventilation.
- opening higher-level windows will create fewer draughts.
- using trickle vents rather than opening windows

You can also consider regularly airing rooms that rely on natural ventilation, by opening windows and doors in between use.

HSE WEBSITE – see links below:

- HSE – Asbestos Essentials - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/a0.pdf>
- HSE – COSHH - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/basics/whatdo.htm>
- HSE – Lifting Equipment at Work <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg290.htm>
- HSE – Manual Handling at Work –<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.htm>
- HSE – Needlestick - [Sharps injuries - What you need to do \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)
- HSE – Painting & Coatings [Frequently asked questions – Paint and coatings \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)
- HSE – Slips, Trips & Falls <http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/slips.htm>
- HSE – Working at Height/Ladders <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg455.pdf>

STAFF ZONE is our bespoke intranet for McSence colleagues with company information in one place where you if you click this link [McSence | Home | McSence](#) or scan the barcode below, then enter passcode is [staffzone123](#) it will take you to the following company **StaffZone**

- Company Handbooks [McSence Handbooks | McSence](#)
- Company Policies: [McSence Policies | McSence](#)
- Health & Safety: [McSence Health & Safety Information | McSence](#)



Any feedback is most welcome and going forward we will be sharing more of this information on a regular basis.

Warmest regards, Martha

Martha Convie

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