



Pesticide Spray Tanks and Confined Space Danger

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Attention: Chemical supply dealerships, farms, and other employers that use pesticide spray tanks.

Nationally, employees are killed or harmed every year in confined spaces associated with agriculture. Being aware of the danger and familiar with workplace safety procedures are the first steps to staying alive and healthy.

Any tank used for storing, mixing, loading, or spraying pesticides or fertilizers is a **confined space** when it's large enough to enter (e.g., through an access port) and occupy. **Such tanks are covered by confined space rules and require a permit for full or partial entries; and other safeguards.**

Some examples of hazards that can exist in tanks and suddenly put lives at risk include:

- Residual liquid or vapor from pesticides or fertilizers
- Low oxygen levels
- Flammable vapor.
- Electrically-powered tools (e.g., welding equipment, grinders, lights)
- Stored energy (e.g., rotating moving parts like agitators).

Suppliers and other employers with employees who may need to enter tanks to **clean, maintain, or repair them (e.g., weld)** must follow entry and other requirements of the confined spaces rule that applies to them. Find confined space rules and definitions plus resources to help with injury prevention by visiting the [Confined Spaces](#) webpage.

To find an electronic copy of this bulletin, go to [Hazard Alerts](#).

Get 1-on-1 assistance from L&I or visit L&I's [Safety & Health webpage](#) for training, videos, and other resources to help strengthen your safety program.

Share this bulletin with others in your industry and safety network.

*This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees to potential hazards associated with work activities. **This is not a rule and creates no new legal obligations.** The information provided includes suggested guidance on how to avoid workplace hazards and describes relevant mandatory safety and health rules. DOSH recommends you also check related rules for additional requirements.*



What you don't know can harm you. Entering an airblast sprayer tank like this one or other confined space to inspect, clean, maintain, or make repairs requires that your employer provide you with special safety training, equipment, and written procedures..

Photo: WSDA



Warning: Confined Space! Stop and do not put any part of your body through the opening of a confined space like this metal tank if your employer doesn't have a required written confined space entry program that includes the tasks you perform.



Sharpen your confined space recognition skills. Assume that chemigation tanks and other tanks or containers large enough to fully enter and work in are confined spaces. This will help you proactively prevent possible injuries associated with these spaces.



Airblast sprayer tanks and other confined spaces might have dangerous moving mechanical parts inside (see arrows in photo to left). Accidental start-up or release of built-up or stored energy during maintenance pose serious injury risks to workers.