

Best-in-Class Thoughts

*"The difference between a hero
and a fool is training.*

*– City of Anderson, SC - Fire
Department*

*"There are no shortcuts to any
place worth going."*

– Beverly Sills

*"Intelligence is knowing what to
do when you don't know what to
do."*

– Art Costa

*"If you think education is expen-
sive, try ignorance."*

– John Harvey



CSR Training - Newtown, CT

this issue

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Note from Leanne

One of the many highlights of MER's Safety Program is our Confined Space Entry and Rescue Program. Through the years, MER's approach to confined space entry and rescue has evolved into a multi-faceted system, designed to provide Best-in-Class confined space rescue solutions for MER employees as well as for our clients through advanced training, specialized equipment and well-structured procedures for safe confined space entry operations.

As you read through this month's Safety Brief, consider the aspects required to make MER's Confined Space Program Best-in-Class: a robust training program, a sound collection of standard operating procedures and a commitment to continuous improvement while maintaining the highest of standards. It's a complex collection of building blocks that make up the foundation of a program that serves as a tremendous representation of our organization.

Confined Space Standby Services

MER's commercial Confined Space services provide Best-in-Class solutions in a rapidly growing niche market. Through the support of an adaptive training program and the adoption of NFPA standards, MER has built a program that provides clients with a high level of confined space support. MER's Confined Space Standby Services program is made up of three main components: Confined Space Inventory with Assessments, Rescue Plan Development and Rescue Standby. MER's Confined Space Rescue (CSR) Specialists perform inventories of clients' confined spaces, helping clients identify permit-required spaces and non-permit required spaces. CSR Specialists then perform space assessments of all permit-required spaces per 29 CFR 1910.146(k). Upon completion of the assessment, CSR Specialists develop comprehensive rescue plans and organize the collection of information in both digital and hard copy form and present to the clients.

Finally, for clients that need confined space rescue support, MER has built a Best-in-Class commercial standby program, supported by advanced technical training and stringent standard operating procedures. MER's standby teams complete several levels of rescue training each year to ensure they have the skills and confidence to safely and effectively perform a rescue in the event of an emergency.



Confined Space Assessments

Employers generally have three choices when considering confined space rescue: in-house teams, third-party rescue or rely on the local emergency management system (EMS). In-house rescue teams may make sense for companies that make frequent confined space entries if they have the funding and time to continually train employees as well as purchase and maintain rescue equipment, but it's not a popular option. For those companies that can't sustain in-house teams or that rarely make entries, third-party standby rescue or local EMS teams can be selected. Although it may seem like local EMS is the best option since the teams are on call 24/7 and are free, blindly relying on a local emergency response agency without properly preparing can result in fines and legal costs that can break a company. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulation governing permit-required confined spaces, 29 CFR 1910.146, requires an employer to ensure that any confined-space rescue team is fully trained and equipped to adequately handle a rescue.

So, how does a responsible employer ensure that an outside rescue team is going to be able to perform well when the time comes? The answer is pre-planning. Employers are required to provide a rescue team access to all confined spaces on the site so that they can "develop appropriate rescue plans and practice rescue operations." In MER's case, this is referred to as performing a Confined Space Assessment (CSA), which involves walking the site, inspecting the confined spaces and observing the tasks being performed. At minimum, a MER assessment includes:

- ◆ Initial discussion with the company's safety and/or managerial personnel
 - Collection of information, such as the number and type of confined spaces and scope of work to be performed.
 - Explanation of MER's Confined Space Standby (CSS) team's ability meet their needs.



- ◆ A MER CSR Specialist performs a site visit.
 - Views confined spaces and surroundings, as well as collects pictures and drawings to attach to CSAs.
 - Discusses hazardous material locations as well as any other hazards the rescue team may encounter.
 - Determines appropriate anchorage points, methods of rescue and equipment needs.
 - Determines number of rescue personnel required.

- ◆ A CSA is completed for each confined space and added to the CSA inventory for that location.
 - After the site visit, confined space rescue plans are documented on a CSA form, and then pictures and drawings are attached.
 - Prior to providing CSS services, the MER CSS team reviews the space-specific CSA to ensure they are familiar the space hazards, required PPE, rescue equipment required, etc.

Additionally, MER encourages our clients to allow MER's CSS teams to practice the rescue plans at their facility. Although, we pride ourselves on providing excellent in-house training, practicing at actual potential rescue sites can be an excellent part of the pre-planning process. The chance to train on a structure that is not designed for training, where every projection is an engineered anchor point and rust has been abolished, is an excellent way for our team to improve their skills, as well as demonstrate that the rescue methods selected will be effective in the event of an actual rescue.

Pre-planning is vital to the success of confined space rescue teams; more importantly, it tremendously improves a victim's chance of survival if a rescue is required. Relying on a local EMS service or any rescue team without pre-planning not only hinders a rescue, it doesn't satisfy regulatory requirements.

www.firehouse.com/article/11129760/technical-rescue-training-confined-space

Date: 2/11/2015 Completed By: James Smith Client: XYZ Power Plant		CONFINED SPACE ASSESSMENT MER	
Client Location: 251 Levy Road, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233 Space Name (Description): Unit 5 Boiler			
SPACE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photos taken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole space (wide shot for identification purposes) • Access points (light shots) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Above - Anchor points above or around manway for rope systems - Below - Identify obstacles such as multiple level access (catwalk with ladder access only) - Around - Show amount of space around manway for equip. set up 		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blueprints or as-builts for the facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps identify areas of the plant and plan out our strategy to assess the spaces in an organized fashion Confined Space Assessment sent to MER Safety	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confined Space Assessment placed in organized designated location at corresponding MER Resource Center			
LOCATION OF SPACE			
Space Location in Facility: (Column lines, floor level, etc.)		Elevation 138', Column 18	
Route to EMS:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elevator <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Ladder <input type="checkbox"/> Stairwell <input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
Explain: After rescue Patient will be lowered to ground level			

There's an App for that!

Rescue Field Guide
CMC Rescue



The Rescue Field Guide app provides access to the 132-page CMC Rope Rescue Field Guide and the 87-page CMC Confined Space Entry and Rescue Field Guide. Complete with full-color illustrations, these guides include equipment overviews and tutorials, examples of common knots, standard communication techniques, and complete descriptions of various anchor, belay and M/A systems.

Why is Physical Fitness Important?

Physical activity provides long-term health benefits for everyone. By being active, stored calories from eating can be burned throughout the day; it can be as easy as walking the dog or as rigorous as running a marathon. Although, it's important to provide opportunities for children to be active early to put them on a path to better physical and mental health, it's never too late to jumpstart a healthy lifestyle.



Physical Activity and Obesity

Over the last 20 years, there's been a significant increase in obesity in the United States. About one-third of U.S. adults (33.8%) are obese and approximately 17% (or 12.5 million) of children and adolescents (aged 2-19 years) are obese. The health implications of obesity in America are startling:

- ◆ If things remain as they are today, one-third of all children born in the year 2000 or later may suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives, while many others are likely to face chronic health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes, and asthma.
- ◆ Studies indicate that overweight youth may never achieve a healthy weight, and up to 70% of obese teens may become obese adults.
- ◆ Even more worrisome, the cumulative effect could be that children born in the year 2000 or later may not outlive their parents.

The impact of obesity doesn't end there. Obesity has personal financial and national economic implications as well. Those who are obese have medical costs that are \$1,429 more than those of normal weight on average (roughly 42% higher); annual direct costs of childhood obesity are \$14.3 billion.

By incorporating physical activity into your daily life—30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children—as well as healthy eating, you will experience positive health benefits and be on the path for a better future.

Impact of Physical Activity on Your Health

Regular physical activity can also produce long-term health benefits. It can help:

- ◆ Prevent chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and stroke (the three leading health-related causes of death)
- ◆ Control weight
- ◆ Make your muscles stronger
- ◆ Reduce fat
- ◆ Promote strong bone, muscle, and joint



development

- ◆ Condition heart and lungs
- ◆ Build overall strength and endurance
- ◆ Improve sleep
- ◆ Decrease potential of becoming depressed
- ◆ Increase your energy and self-esteem
- ◆ Relieve stress
- ◆ Increase your chances of living longer

When you are not physically active, you are a higher risk for:

- ◆ High blood pressure
- ◆ High blood cholesterol
- ◆ Stroke
- ◆ Type 2 diabetes
- ◆ Heart disease
- ◆ Cancer

www.fitness.gov/be-active/why-is-it-important/

9 Reasons to Stay Fit

1. Improves heart health. Regular aerobic exercise helps prevent heart disease, strengthens the heart muscle, decreases clotting, and stabilizes electrical activity.

2. Improves heat tolerance. Exercise increases blood volume, helping heat tolerance.

3. Helps prevent Type II diabetes. Exercise improves the body's ability to regulate blood sugar.

4. Reduces risk of strains and sprains. Physical activity strengthens muscles, joints, tendons & ligaments.

5. May improve emotional state. Taking part in health and wellness programs improves psychological and emotional states, which improves emotional reactions during emergency response situations. An improved emotional state also improves self-esteem, self-efficacy, and sleep patterns, thereby reducing depression, anxiety, and stress.

6. Maintains weight loss. Weight loss is more likely to be maintained if a person continues to exercise.

7. Maintains metabolic rate. Exercise helps prevent the drop in metabolic rate that can accompany weight loss & aging.

8. Prevents back problems. Maintaining flexibility in legs and lower back and increasing strength in the abdominal and back muscles can help prevent the development of back problems.

9. Encourages overall healthy lifestyle. As fitness and nutrition improves, activity becomes easier. Exercise increases stress resistance and improves sleep.

www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa_321.pdf





Values

Professionalism

Integrity

Mutual Respect

Discipline

CSR Training Enhancements

Over the last ten years, MER's confined space rescue (CSR) training has evolved into a comprehensive, multi-level training program, focused on knowledge retention, technical skill development and advanced scenario presentation.

In 2005, MER was outsourcing several training professionals to provide CSR training. In 2007, MER began internalizing all CSR training with the intention to standardize the material across the company and customize the training to meet MER's special needs (as opposed to generic basic training). In 2011, MER began providing CSR classes with models of various types of confined spaces found in the industries that MER serves. These models were designed to replicate the real-world challenges with which rescue teams are faced and provide teams with an opportunity to test their skills in more advanced spaces than in previous years.

Through the years, industry focus on confined space entry and rescue has risen significantly, and in order to stay in front of the curve, MER continued to push the evolution of the program. In 2013,

MER added a mobile confined space rescue modular, complete with three (3) separate types of spaces (vertical, horizontal and multi-level) and five (5) different types of access points. Additionally, MER began tiered training, which separated CSR Specialists from standard field employees and inserted a higher level of training, which includes 80-120 hours of advanced high-angle rescue training, with some Specialists earning NFPA certification. Also in 2013, MER began testing all employees for CSR skills proficiency, utilizing various methods to ensure that employees placed on a CSR team have the knowledge and practical skills to perform effectively long after a training class is completed.



In 2015, MER again changed the training program to reflect the challenges of the industry, and inserted a two-day initial CSR training class that allows all students the ability to go through the various skill levels while providing them a second day to test those skills on the rescue modular. Once all employees complete that two-day CSR "orientation" class, they are responsible for completing annual refreshers consisting of one full day of classroom and practical activities, periodic skill drills and the annual proficiency evaluation.

The evolution of MER's CSR training program has allowed MER to increase the safety of our employees who enter confined spaces daily and those who act as their rescue team. Additionally, the advanced skills development has allowed MER to provide our clients a much-needed, high quality confined space support service. The program will continue to grow and evolve to meet and exceed the industry expectations and the needs of our clients.

Employee Development

Lockout/Tagout (Control of Hazardous Energy) Webinar - April 8th

A steam valve is accidentally opened burning workers who are cleaning in the area... A conveyor system suddenly turns on crushing a worker who is vacuuming underneath the belt system... Internal wiring on a piece of equipment electrically shorts shocking employee attempting to repair it.

All of these incidents are examples of failure to control hazardous energy, which could result in a fatal accident. In fact, these type of incidents accounts for nearly 10 percent of serious accidents in many industries. Proper lockout/tagout (LOTO) practices and procedures safeguard workers from the release of hazardous energy. MER's Lockout/Tagout webinar will review the practices and procedures necessary to disable machinery or equipment to prevent the release of hazardous energy.

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Safety Brief

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