

§MN503.10 General.

(a) Confined Spaces. Certain structures that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical assistance on are classified as "Confined Spaces" by Department of Labor and Industry Rules. These rules contain specific requirements that must be met before a person enters a confined space. Generally all catch basins, sumps, reception pits, covered tanks, etc, that the NRCS designs are considered confined spaces. It is generally known that manure in these structures can produce dangerous gases; however, even dry structures or those with only clean water can also develop dangerous air conditions. These conditions can develop quickly and may even occur during construction.

(1) During the design of structures that may be considered confined spaces, fencing, suitable covers or other means shall be specified in the plans to protect those areas from unauthorized entry. The planned measures shall be in place prior to certification by the NRCS.

(2) Where a structure is included in a plan that meets the criteria for a confined space, an appropriate warning statement shall be included in the operation and maintenance plan.

(3) Where a sump is included in a design, flexible discharge hoses, guide rails with flange connections, or other mechanical methods shall be considered to eliminate the need for sump entry during pump maintenance.

(4) NRCS employees shall not enter a confined space for construction inspection or any other purpose without proper authorization. All requests for authorization to enter confined spaces shall be submitted to the state conservation engineer.