



ALCA
ARIZONA LANDSCAPE
CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



FIGHTING FATIGUE

Fatigue is the condition of being physically or mentally tired or exhausted. Extreme fatigue can lead to uncontrolled and involuntary shutdown of the brain.

Fortunately, there are ways to fight fatigue:

- Get eight hours of sleep before starting work.
- Sleep at the same time each day. If your shifts rotate, establish clockwise rotations (from day to evening to night). Clockwise rotating makes it easier to go to sleep.
- Take all scheduled work breaks. A snack or exercise during the break will help refresh you.
- When trying to sleep during the daytime, find a cool, dark, quiet location. Use earplugs, soft music, or a fan to block out noise.
- See the doctor about sleep disorders, medications for illness, and using bright lights on the job or during waking hours.
- Eat a well-balanced diet at the beginning of the “day” with high protein foods and ending with carbohydrates. Do not eat great quantities before bedtime; they may cause trouble sleeping.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and cigarettes. These substances cause sleep disturbances.
- Walking, stretching, and aerobics can help a person stay awake. Exercise will give you stamina and help you to fall asleep later.
- Work carefully and very methodically, always following proper procedures.
- When you’re fatigued **you will make errors in judgment**. Your mind or eyes can be off task and you can make a critical error.

Permit or not

Although the danger in a confined space is obvious, the type of danger often is not. For example, a confined space with sufficient oxygen might become an oxygen-deficient space once a worker begins welding or performing other tasks.

These are some of the reasons confined spaces are hazardous:

- Lack of adequate ventilation can cause the atmosphere to become life threatening because of harmful gases.
- The oxygen content of the air can drop below the level required for human life.
- Sometimes a confined space is deliberately filled with nitrogen as a fire prevention technique. Nitrogen cannot sustain human life, so you must use respiratory protection.
- Many gases are explosive and can be set off by a spark.
- Even dust is an explosion hazard in a confined space. Finely-ground materials such as grain, fibers and plastics can explode upon ignition.
- Confined spaces often have physical hazards, such as moving equipment and machinery.
- Tanks and other enclosed confined spaces can be filled with materials unless the flow process for filling it is controlled.

Before entering any confined space you must test the atmosphere to determine if any harmful gases are present. There must also be radio contact with an attendant outside the confined space and a rescue team at the ready in case of an emergency.

