

Alternate entry: 437-002-0146(10)

What is alternate entry?

Alternate entry is a set of specific procedures for entering a permit space without an entry permit; however, the space remains a permit space under alternate entry. The following sections of 437-002-0146 apply under alternate entry:

- Evaluation, 437-002-0146(4)
- Equipment, 437-002-0146(7)
- Alternate entry, 437-002-0146(10)
- Training, 437-002-0146(11)

Employees may enter a permit space under alternate entry only after you do one of the following:

- Eliminate all physical hazards and hazardous atmospheres in the space so that conditions that caused the hazards no longer exist
- Eliminate all physical hazards in the space and control all hazardous atmospheres with continuous ventilation

Alternate entry procedures

Develop and implement alternate entry procedures that address:

- The hazards associated with the space
- The methods used to eliminate the hazards
- The methods used to ensure that the hazards have been eliminated
- The methods used to test the space for all hazardous atmospheres
- The methods used to determine if unsafe conditions occur before or during entry
- The criteria and conditions for evacuating the space
- The methods for training employees in these procedures
- The methods for ensuring employees follow these procedures

Ensure that all employees who enter:

- Have the opportunity to observe the activities required to comply with the alternate entry procedures
- Have an effective means of communication, such as a two-way radio, cellphone, or voice (if other employees are present) to request help in an emergency

Documenting alternate entry

Document each entry. Include:

- The location of the space
- The hazards associated with the space
- Measures taken to eliminate the hazards
- Measures used to control hazardous atmospheres (when applicable)
- The identity of the direct-reading instruments used to test the atmosphere (when applicable)
- The results of atmospheric testing (when applicable)
- The entry date
- The duration of the entry
- Any conditions that caused the evacuation of the space
- The name, title, and signature of the person responsible for ensuring that the space is safe to enter

Keep the document where the space is located for the duration of the entry.

Alternate entry in continuous systems

Alternate entry cannot be used to enter a permit space that is a continuous system (such as a sewer) unless you segregate the area to be entered from the rest of the space, demonstrate that engulfment can’t happen and the only hazard is atmospheric, or you demonstrate and document that the hazardous conditions do not exist within the entire system during the entry.

Alternate entry with continuous ventilation

When using ventilation to control hazardous atmospheres:

- Use only properly calibrated direct-reading meters to test the atmosphere
- Ensure that direct-reading instruments are used and tested according to the manufacturer’s instructions
- Test the space for hazardous atmospheres before entering
- Ensure that employees do not enter the space until testing has verified that all hazardous atmospheres are controlled by ventilation
- Perform continuous monitoring for all hazardous atmospheres while employees are in the space

Rescue procedure not required under alternate entry

There is no requirement for a rescue procedure when workers enter a confined space under alternate entry because hazards in the space have been eliminated or controlled.

Evacuating a permit space under alternate entry

Employees must immediately evacuate a space:

- When monitoring indicates the presence of a hazardous atmosphere
- When a direct-reading meter used for monitoring fails
- When ventilation fails
- When a new hazard is identified or conditions in the space change

When a space is evacuated, it cannot be re-entered unless the conditions that caused the evacuation are corrected.

Re-entry must be treated and documented as a new entry.