



2015 SAFETY AND HEALTH BULLETIN

TO: All SMACNA Members **SB: 15-02**

FROM: Michael A. McCullion, CSP, ARM
Director of Safety and Health

DATE: May 1, 2015

SUBJECT: **New OSHA Rule for Confined Spaces in Construction**

On May 1, 2015, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a [final rule](#) to increase protections for construction workers in [confined spaces](#).

Manholes, crawl spaces, tanks and other confined spaces are not intended for continuous occupancy. They are also difficult to exit in an emergency.

People working in confined spaces often face life-threatening hazards including toxic substances, electrocutions, explosions and asphyxiation.

The rule will provide construction workers with protections similar to those in the existing General Industry standard with some differences tailored to the construction industry. These include requirements to ensure that multiple employers share vital safety information and to continuously monitor hazards – a safety option made possible by technological advances after the manufacturing and general industry standards were created.

Compliance assistance material and additional information is available on OSHA's [Confined Spaces in Construction](#) Web page.

The effective date for this standard is targeted for early August 2015. States with “state-plan” OSHA programs will have to adopt this standard or develop a similar rule.

SMACNA will be providing further information on the specific requirements in the coming weeks. If you have questions about the new standard, please contact Mike McCullion, director of safety and health at mmccullion@smacna.org or (703) 995-4027.