

**TALKING POINTS**  
**DEPUTY SECRETARY OF LABOR CHRIS LU**  
**OSHA CONFINED SPACE STANDARD IN CONSTRUCTION TELECONFERENCE**  
**MAY 1, 2015**

- This week, we commemorated Workers Memorial Day at the Department of Labor, and around the country. We remembered and honored the working men and women who have lost their lives on the job.
- We mourned not just for the lives lost, but also for the opportunity that is lost: the American dreams that are extinguished. And we recognized the burden that workplace injuries and illnesses place on workers, their families, and on society as a whole.
- We at the Department of Labor believe that a nation built on the dignity of work must provide safe conditions for its people.
- As President Obama has said: "We must never accept that injury, illness or death is the cost of doing business."
- While we have made great progress during this Administration, we know that we have more work to do. We know that construction workers face risks every day.
- And construction workers who enter spaces such as manholes, crawl spaces, or tanks face particularly hazardous risks — such as electrocutions, explosions, and asphyxiation.
- That's why I am proud that today the Department of Labor, through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, is issuing a final rule to bring these workers greater protections.
- This new rule, and the increased protections it affords workers, will significantly improve the safety of construction workers who enter confined spaces.
- Our Assistant Secretary for OSHA will talk about two workers who were overcome by fumes and died last year while repairing leaks in a manhole.
- This rule will protect other workers like them, saving both workers lives and preventing an estimated 780 serious injuries every year.
- Workers should not have to sacrifice their lives or their health to bring home a paycheck. This is why OSHA is taking these steps to prevent worker fatalities and injuries.
- This final rule, issued today by OSHA, is the culmination of decades of work by the agency to increase protection for construction workers entering confined spaces.
- It is a major step along way to help assure that at the end of every workday, every worker can go home safe and healthy.
- I will now turn the call over to Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, Dr. David Michaels. And want to thank him for his leadership and his tireless work on behalf of workers.

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