



SafetyAlert

We're Serious About Safety

Trenches & Excavations Can Be Death Traps

Trenches/excavations can either be death traps or safe places for employees to work. Do you let employees enter an unsafe trench for just a minute? Do you follow OSHA and company rules for excavation work? It all adds up.

Before allowing employees to enter a trench do you:

- ▶ Protect employees in an excavation from a cave-in by an adequate protective system designed in accordance with the OSHA regulations (this could include sloping and benching, support, or shield systems?)
- Clear all surface hazards and move the spoil pile back the required two feet?
- Locate and protect, support, or remove all underground utilities and other hazards?
- Provide a safe means of entry and exit from excavations that are more than four feet deep that meets OSHA requirements?
- Test for and abate hazardous atmospheres if they exist, or could reasonably be expected to exist?
- Provide emergency rescue equipment where hazardous atmospheres exist or could reasonably be expected to develop during work in the excavation?
- Provide adequate protection for employees working in excavations where water is accumulating or could accumulate?
- Provide protection for employees from loose rock or soil that could pose a hazard by falling or rolling from the excavation face?
- Do you require your company/competent person to:
 1. Inspect the excavation, adjacent area, and protective systems daily for evidence of situations that could result in possible cave-ins, indications of failure of protective systems, hazardous atmospheres, or other hazardous conditions?
 2. Inspect the excavation after every rainstorm or other hazard-increasing occurrence?
 3. Remove employees from the trench/excavation if any of the above hazards exist?
- Provide walkways where employees and/or equipment are required or permitted to cross over excavations?



- ▶ If you can answer yes to all of the previous questions, then you can be reasonably sure your employees are safe while working on your excavation project.

Employee Training Requirements

Make sure employees are aware of and know:

- The previous listed requirements.
- When to leave an excavation, and how to respond to an emergency.
- How to properly use the equipment and protective gear you have provided.
- Safe work practices when you or the company/competent person is not around.
- How to report unsafe situations immediately to their supervisor/competent person.

For assistance, contact your loss prevention representative:
safety@beaconmutual.com



Beacon Mutual offers a variety of training opportunities for employees, supervisors and managers. Please check our seminar schedule for more information.
www.beaconmutual.com

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