

EXCAVATING REQUIREMENTS

Construction activity is increasing, and that means more excavation work. Use the following checklist to help ensure that your employees stay safe, and your company stays in compliance.

- Has the daily inspection of the excavation site been made by the competent person?
- Are hard hats being worn by all personnel at all times when on the excavation site?
- Are personal protection equipment (eye shields, toe shields, etc.) being used when a hazard exists?
- Is a copy of the OSHA Trenching standard present on site (preferably located on the excavator for quick reference)?
- Are employees who are exposed to vehicular traffic wearing warning vests?
- Are employees being kept out from under suspended load?
- Before opening any excavation, have efforts been made to determine if there are underground utility installations in the area?
- If there are underground utility installations, have utility companies been contacted before excavation was started?
- If underground utility installations are located, have they been protected, braced or removed to safeguard employees?
- Have all surface encumbrances been removed?
- In excavations into which employees are required to enter, have excavated or other materials been effectively stored and retained at least 2 feet or more from the edge of the excavation?
- Do trenches 4-5 feet or more have adequate means of exit, such as ladders or steps, located where no more than 25 feet of travel is required?
- Has a harness and lifeline been provided whenever an employee is required to enter a confined footing excavation?
- Have steps been taken to protect employees from loose rock and hazards of falling rocks?
- Do the walls and faces of trenches 5 feet or deeper and all excavations in which employees are exposed to danger from moving ground or a cave-in have a protection system, i.e. shoring, sloping or some other equivalent means?
- Is there any evidence of a possible cave-in or slide? (If yes, all work in the excavation must cease until the necessary precautions have been taken to safeguard the employees).
- Have guardrails been provided when employees are required to cross a walkway at an excavation site?
- If excavation is remote, such as a well, pit or shaft, have physical barriers been provided?
- Have structural ramps used solely by employees been designed by a competent person?
- Do the structural ramps have appropriate means provided to prevent slipping and ARE the runways uniform in thickness?
- Has a barricade, stop log or hand signal been provided when equipment is required close to the excavation?
- Are sidewalks, pavement etc. protected from undercuts?
- Have adjoining buildings, walls, etc. been braced or otherwise supported?
- Has the air around the excavation site been tested to make sure an oxygen deficiency or hazardous atmosphere does not exist?
- If hazardous atmosphere does exist, has proper Personal Protective Equipment been provided?
- Is water accumulation a problem? (If yes, are employees in the excavation site protected and equipment monitored by a competent person?)
- Does the excavation interrupt the natural drainage? (If yes, has suitable means been provided to divert the water?)