

TRENCH & EXCAVATION CHECKLIST

General Conditions and Inspection

1. Do you have an official "Competent Person" (a trained leader who oversees safety practices) who has specific training in soil analysis, use of protective systems, and the requirements of the Excavations and Trenches Safety Orders?
2. Does the "Competent Person" have the authority to remove workers from the excavation immediately?
3. Are excavations, adjacent areas, and protective systems inspected and conditions documented by a Competent Person: Daily prior to the start of work, throughout the shift, and after any occurrence that could increase the hazard?
4. Are employees protected from loose rock or soil that could pose a hazard by falling or rolling into the excavation?
5. Do all workers wear hardhats?
6. Are extra materials and equipment set back at least 2 feet from the edge of the excavation?
7. Are barriers provided to mark and protect all open excavations, wells, pits, and shafts?
8. Are walkways and bridges over excavations 6 feet or more high and 30 inches wide equipped with standard guardrails and toe boards?
9. Are warning vests or other highly visible clothing provided and worn by employees exposed to vehicular traffic?
10. Are employees required to stand away from vehicles being loaded or unloaded?
11. Are warning systems established and used when equipment is operating near the edge of an excavation?
12. Are employees prohibited from being under suspended loads?
13. Are employees prohibited from working on the faces of sloped or benched excavations above other employees?

Underground Utilities

1. Are utilities companies contacted and/or utilities located before digging as required by local, state, and federal law?
2. Are the exact locations clearly marked?
3. Are underground installations protected, supported, or removed when an excavation is open?

Entering and Exiting

1. Are ladders or other means of access and exit in place in all trenches 4 feet or more deep?
2. Are all workers within 25 feet of a means of access and exit?
3. Are the ladders that are used in excavations secured and extended 3 feet above edge of the excavation? (stepladders are not to be used)
4. Are ramps used by employees designed to have a 5:1 / 20% slope maximum?"
5. Are ramps, planks or walkways constructed of materials of uniform thickness, fastened together, equipped with no-slip surfaces?
6. Are employees protected from cave-ins when entering or exiting excavation?

Weather and Wet Conditions

1. Are precautions taken to protect employees from water accumulation?
2. Is water removal equipment monitored by "Competent Person?"
3. Is surface water or runoff diverted after rainstorms?

Protective Systems

1. Are protective systems chosen based upon soils analysis, trench depth and expected loads?
2. For excavations exceeding 20 feet in depth, has a Registered Professional Engineer designed the protective system?
3. Are materials and equipment that are used for protective systems inspected and in good condition?
4. Are damaged materials and equipment immediately removed from service?
5. Are damaged materials and equipment inspected by a Registered Professional Engineer after repairs are made and before being placed back in service?
6. Are protective systems installed without exposing employees to hazards of cave-ins, collapses, or threat of being struck by materials or equipment?
7. Are support systems provided to insure stability of adjacent structures, buildings, roadways, sidewalks, etc.?
8. Are excavations dug below the level of a base or footing supported, and have they been approved by a Registered Professional Engineer?
9. Does back-filling progress with the removal of the support system?
10. Is a shield system installed to prevent lateral movement?
11. Are employees prohibited from remaining in a shield system during vertical movement?

Air Monitoring and Hazardous Atmospheres

1. Do you test the atmosphere within excavations for oxygen levels, or combustible or toxic contaminants?
2. Is emergency rescue equipment available when hazardous atmospheres could or do exist?
3. Are employees trained to use personal protective equipment and other rescue equipment?