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SOLUTIONS

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June is Trench Safety Month

We want to remind you that your safety is most important year-round, but this month, we put a focus on excavation safety. With that in mind, for the month of June, we'd like to have as many companies as possible participate in a Trench Safety Stand Down. For the Stand Down, we welcome companies to take time to engage with their crews and host a toolbox talk related to excavation safety. Companies can come up with their own material or use the material in this flyer, but have the discussion be around incidents, OSHA rules, or company policies for excavation.

If your company participates, please take a picture of your stand down and tag Team EJP on social media to be entered to win a number of prizes! Facebook & Instagram - @TeamEJPrescott; LinkedIn – Everett J. Prescott, Inc.



Even with the introduction of new equipment and strict enforcement of OSHA standards, many workers die each year, and many more are seriously injured in trench accidents. One cubic yard of dirt weighs an average of 2,700 pounds, and a cave-in is like dropping a small car from one foot above your head. To excavate and trench safely, you must know about soil mechanics and how to shield, slope, and shore. Horizontal and vertical forces within the earth keep undisturbed soil in place. An excavation disturbs or eliminates these forces. Soil naturally moves downward and inward. A number of factors govern how fast this occurs, such as soil type, moisture, vibration, and surface loading.

We want you to go home to your loved ones every night. If a trench is questionable, **do not enter**. If you are uncertain, **do not enter**. If the proper measures have not been taken (sloping, trench box, hard hats, safety vests, etc.) **DO NOT ENTER**. If you have any questions, please reach out. We're here for you.



Trench Safety: Before You Dig It, Plan It!

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1 cubic yard of dirt
weighs the same as a
compact car!

137 deaths
were caused by excavation and
trench cave-ins from 2011 to 2018.



BEFORE YOU DIG IT, PLAN IT!

- Assign and train a competent person.
- Call 811 to identify and mark underground utility lines.
- Dig a minimum 5 ft away from utility lines.
- Evaluate the soil to determine its stability.
- Plan the job layout to identify safe locations for spoil piles and heavy equipment routes.
- Before the job starts, if the trench will be 5 ft or deeper, set up a protective system. If the trench will be 20 ft or deeper, provide engineering protections.
- Have a traffic control plan and lane closure permits.
- Develop a trench emergency action plan.

WHEN YOU DIG IT, USE CAUTION!

- Have the competent person inspect the trench, nearby areas, and protective systems each day before the start of work, when conditions change throughout the shift, and after every rainstorm.
- Maintain signs, barriers, and protection around the trench.
- Keep all vehicles and machinery a safe distance from the excavation.
- Ensure ladders and exits are never more than 25 ft away from any worker in the trench.
- Remove workers from the excavation upon any evidence that could cause a cave-in.
- Monitor other types of trench-related hazards that can occur, such as falls from the edge, rigging hazards, or toxic and combustible gases, or oxygen deficient conditions.
- Enforce procedures to ensure that work in an unprotected trench does not occur.

IF YOU WORK IN A TRENCH:

Check the trench for problems before entering and never enter an unprotected trench.

Make sure there is safe entry and exit before entering.

When there is evidence of problems, exit the trench and inform the competent person.

Never assume there will be a warning before a cave-in, or that you will have time to get out.



References

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