



Trenching

According to BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics) findings there were 215 fatalities involving trenches in the US between 2003 and 2008. (That is an average of over 35 per year)

Whenever Trenching is involved there are some things to remember:

- Any trench that someone will enter must be inspected by a competent person to assure that it is safe at any depth.
- If a trench is over 4' deep there must be ladders, ramps or some kind of safe access so that any one inside of the trench does not have to travel more than 25' to exit the trench.
- Ladders must extend at least 36" above the grade that is accessed.
- If a trench is over 5' deep the trench must be inspected by a competent person and the soil type must be determined and the appropriate shoring, sloping or shielding must be used.
- Inspections must be documented.
- A visual and a manual test must be performed to determine the type of soil that the trench is dug in.
- All trenches must be inspected by a competent person after it rains or as conditions change to determine that it is safe to enter.
- Spoils and other material must be a minimum of 2' from the edge of the trench.

OSHA Soil Categories:

Stable Rock is natural solid mineral matter that can be excavated with vertical sides and remain intact while exposed.

Type A Soils are cohesive soils with an unconfined compressive strength of 1.5 tons per sq foot (tsf) or greater.

Slope = ¾ to 1

Type B Soils are cohesive soils with an unconfined compressive strength greater than .5 tsf, but less than 1.5 tsf or greater.

Slope = 1 to 1

Type C Soils are cohesive soils with an unconfined compressive strength of .5 tsf or less.

Slope = 1½ to 1

Layered Strata is where soils are configured in layers, such as: A over B, the soil must be classified on the basis of the soil classification of the weakest soil layer. If the less stable layer lies above a more stable layer, such as: B over A the soil may be classified individually.

A Competent Person is someone with: knowledge of soil analysis and use of protective systems and OSHA reg's, as well as the ability to detect conditions that may lead to a cave in, failures in protective systems, hazardous atmospheres and other hazards. **They must also have the authority to take prompt action.**

Points to Take With You:

- 4' Deep - Access Within 25'
- 5' Deep - Shoring, Sloping or Shielding.
- A Competent Person must inspect the trench.
- Spoils must be a minimum of 2' from the edge of the trench.

Meeting Conducted By: _____

Date: _____

Comments: _____

Attendees:	Print	Signature	Print	Signature
1.			8.	
2.			9.	
3.			10.	
4.			11.	
5.			12.	
6.			13.	
7.			14.	