

“JOBSITE SAFETY” ~ ILLUSTRATED SERIES

AN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH TRAINING SERIES FOR HIGH HAZARD INDUSTRIES

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TRENCHING & EXCAVATING



In the U.S., more than 800 construction workers die every year while on the job. One of the most dangerous types of construction work is trenching, which kills, on average, 40 workers every year. Workers can suffer death or serious injury within minutes of being caught in a trench cave-in. But these deaths can be prevented.

5 Things You Should Know to Stay Safe:

1. Ensure there is a safe way to enter and exit
2. Trenches must have cave-in protection
3. Keep materials away from the edge
4. Look for standing water or other hazards
5. Never enter a trench unless it has been properly inspected



1 cubic yard of soil can weigh as much as a car, (3,000 lbs), so unless the trench is cut entirely into stable rock, protection against cave-ins must be used for all trenches more than 5 feet or any trench that show signs of cave-in. Before workers can do any work in a trench, a competent person must conduct an inspection to identify and remove any hazards. Inspections must be performed at the start of every shift, after a rainstorm, or whenever conditions change. The competent person must also test the soil.

