



SAFETY ALERT

Excavation Hazard (IDLH)

Safety Alert: Excavation Hazard *Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH)*

Date of Incident: August 7, 2024

Location: Texas Project

Incident Overview:

During a routine site visit on August 7, 2024, a safety team member identified a serious safety violation at a Texas project. Two workers were found inside an excavation, actively undercutting a Class-C vertical soil wall measuring approximately 7 feet tall while searching for an underground aeration line. Alarming, the workers were positioned directly beneath the undercut portion of the soil wall, further exacerbating the danger. The situation was immediately recognized as highly dangerous.

Hazard Details:

- **Excavation Conditions:**
 - The soil was classified as **Class-C**—the least stable type of soil.
 - The trench had a **7-foot vertical wall** with no protective systems in place.
 - The trench was **undercut** by the workers, further destabilizing the excavation.
- **Worker Actions:**
 - The workers were attempting to locate an aeration line by undercutting the trench wall, significantly increasing the risk of a cave-in.

Required Safety Protocols:

1. **Excavation Permit:**
 - An excavation permit **must be completed** prior to the commencement of any earth-cutting activities.
2. **Competent Person Requirement:**
 - A **trained competent person** must be present at the site of the excavation throughout the entire process.
3. **Job Hazard Analysis (JHA):**
 - The crew performing the excavation must conduct a **Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)** before beginning any excavation work.

Key Issues Identified:

- **Failure to Implement Protective Systems:**
 - The excavation lacked proper sloping, shoring, or shielding, which are critical in preventing trench collapses.
- **Inadequate Supervision:**
 - No competent person was on-site to ensure that the excavation was carried out safely.

Immediate Actions Taken:

A safety standdown was conducted on-site to address the violation. All personnel involved were informed about the critical risks and the necessity of adhering to proper excavation protocols.

Preventative Measures:

- **Training and Reinforcement:**
 - All teams will undergo additional training on excavation safety, focusing on the importance of protective systems, the role of a competent person, and the JHA process.
- **Strict Enforcement of Protocols:**
 - Going forward, excavation activities will not commence without the proper completion of an excavation permit and the presence of a competent person.

Safety is our highest priority. Let's ensure that all procedures are strictly followed to prevent such incidents in the future.

