

Trenching and Shoring

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Because of the various types of soil and their angle of repose, trenching without bracing or shoring is hazardous. Even in hard soil a cave-in can occur at 5 feet. If such a failure does occur, persons in the trench can be buried, usually resulting in serious injury or even death. Improper or careless installation of bracing and shoring can cause similar tragedies. Let's review the hazards of trenching and the safety requirements for shoring and bracing.

It's essential in the excavation of trenches 5 feet or more in depth that the exposed faces of these trenches be supported and held firmly in place by adequate bracing. This requirement must be complied with for all trenching, except:

1. Trenches that are in rock or hard shale.
2. Trenches with exposed faces sloped to the angle of repose for the type of soil in which the excavation is being made. In no case can this angle be less than 1 foot horizontally to 3 feet vertically.
3. Trenches in which substantially fabricated safety cages are used.

Under no conditions should bracing or shoring be omitted, regardless of the length of time that the trench will be open. To prevent placing an additional load on the trench face wall, excavated material must be placed no less than 3 feet from the edge of the trench. At no time should an individual be permitted to work within the area of operation of any piece of equipment that is excavating the trench.

Employees should never ride the bucket or wheel of the trencher to the bottom of the excavation. Ladders should be used at all times. Whenever working in the area of trenching operations, don't forget--wear your hard hat.

In all bracing and shoring operations, management is responsible for the type of bracing, the material size and proper installation. You are responsible for the safe handling of the material and safe installation. By being proficient in the installation of proper bracing, the application of safety precautions and the knowledge of soil conditions, you can eliminate the hazards involved in trenching operations.

Note to discussion Leader

If there have been any accidents in your area, be prepared to discuss them with your employees. Listen to their ideas; they may have the answer you have been looking for. Also, mention any hazards that are unique to your operation.

GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

ENDING THE MEETING

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

Have you reviewed the M.S.D.S Sheet for this safety topic? Yes____ No____
N/A____

Comments
