Excavation Hazard Alert #2

Yesterday, November 13, 2019 we had a trench related fatality in the Houston area. A 5-7’ deep trench collapsed burying a worker. Another worker attempted to dig him out until the mini-excavator began falling into the trench.

Every trench has the potential to be deadly. Following the basics of trench safety basics will prevent further deaths and tragedy.

SLOPE IT
800-321-OSHA (6742)
SHORE IT
SHIELD IT

Talk to your workers, your supervisors, and your subcontractors. Let’s not let this happen again.

When done safely, trenching operations can reduce worker exposure to cave-ins, falling loads, hazardous atmospheres, and hazards from mobile equipment.

OSHA standards require that trenches and protective systems be inspected daily and as conditions change by a competent person before work begins.

Never enter a trench unless:

- It has been properly inspected by a competent person.
- Cave-in protection measures are in place.
- There is a safe way to enter and exit.
- Equipment and materials are away from the edge.
- It is free of standing water and atmospheric hazards.

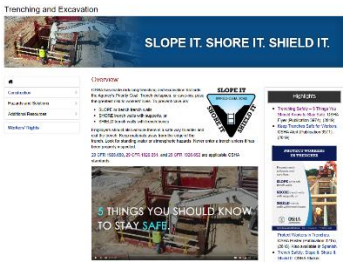
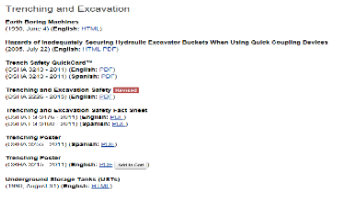
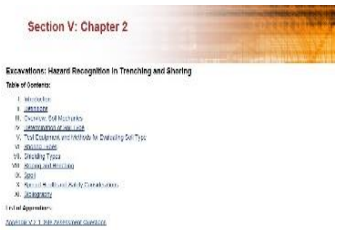
Prevent trench collapses:

- Trenches 5 feet deep or greater require a protective system.
- Trenches 20 feet deep or greater require a protective system designed by a registered professional engineer.

Protective systems for trenches:

- **SLOPE** or bench trench walls by cutting back the trench wall at an angle inclined away from the excavation.
- **SHORE** trench walls by installing aluminum hydraulic or other types of supports to prevent soil movement.
- **SHIELD** trench walls by using trench boxes or other types of supports to prevent soil cave-ins.

Additional resources:

	**OSHA Trenching and Excavation Safety and Health Topic Page** https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/trenchingexcavation/index.html Excavation and trenching hazards and safety information
	**NUCA Trench Safety Stand Down Webpage** http://www.nuca.com/tssd Tools and resources on excavation safety that can be used to for a safety stand down. A certificate of participation can also be obtained.
	**OSHA Trench and Excavation Publications** https://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.athruz?pType=Industry&pID=213 and https://www.osha.gov/video/
	**OSHA Technical Manual Trenching and Excavations** https://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_v/otm_v_2.html Information on trenching and excavation

Safety doesn't have shortcuts. You might save a minute but may lose your life.

Let's send everyone home safely at the end of the day.