



from the desk of.....*Jim Persons*

## **Trench/Excavation Safety**

Trench safety is no accident. Accidents can and do occur in trenches/excavations as a result of inadequate hazard assessment, improperly sloped walls or incorrect shoring materials. Our company recognizes the hazards associated with trench/excavation operations and has established very specific guidelines for employees who work in them. Under no circumstances should you enter a trench/excavation that is deeper than 5 feet unless it has been inspected and is properly sloped or shored

**Cal-OSHA states that a competent person must be on site and is responsible for the following:**

- Conduct inspections of the trenches/excavations, adjacent areas, and protective systems before the start of work; as needed throughout the shift; and daily for potential cave-ins, failures, hazardous atmospheres, or other hazards.
- Take prompt corrective action or remove employees from the hazard.

**Additional safety requirements include:**

- Checking the trench and/or excavation for tension cracks, spalling and sloughing soils.
- Keeping spoils at least 2 feet from the edge.
- Inspecting hydraulic shoring or trench boxes before placement in the trench and/or excavation.
- Providing a ladder every 25 feet for access/egress in trenches 4 feet or deeper.
- Inspecting the trench and/or excavation after rainstorms.
- Monitoring the atmosphere in the trench and/or excavation.
- Keeping heavy equipment (backhoes/excavators) away from the edge of the trench/excavation.
- Erecting temporary and/or permanent barricades around trenches/excavations.
- Providing walkways over trenches and staircases (if required).



## Daily Trench/Excavation Report

Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Competent Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Soil Classification: \_\_\_\_\_ Trench Depth/Width: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Protective System Used: \_\_\_\_\_

### Check All That Apply:

- Excavations, adjacent areas, and protective systems inspected by a competent person daily before the start of work.
- Trenches over 5 feet in depth are properly benched/shored.
- Spoils, materials, and equipment set back at least two feet from edge of excavation.
- Walkways and bridges over excavations six feet or more in depth and 30 inches wide are equipped with standard guardrails.
- Utility companies contacted and/or utilities located.
- Exact location of utilities marked.
- Underground installations protected, supported, or removed when excavation is open.
- Lateral travel to means of egress no greater than 25 feet in excavations four feet or more in depth.
- Ladders used in excavations secured and extended three feet above the edge of the trench.
- Precautions take to protect employees from the accumulation of water.
- Inspections made after every rainstorm or other hazard-increasing occurrence.
- Atmosphere within the excavation tested where there is a reasonable possibility of an oxygen deficiency, combustible or other harmful contaminant exposing employees to a hazard.
- Testing conducted often to ensure that the atmosphere remains safe.