integrity safety services

Weekly Safety Meeting

Job Site Hazards - Excavations

Date: _____ Jobsite: _____

Discussion Leader:

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Attendance Sign- In:

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Summary

Cave-ins and slough-offs are a major cause of deaths in the construction industry each year. Excavations must be properly shored or cut back to an acceptable angle of repose; otherwise, there will be a constant threat of a cave-in and the associated chance of injury or loss of life. A qualified person must be involved in planning and having a safe excavation project.

Guide for Discussion

Before Excavation Review

- Underground utilities located? (Checked with local utility companies or property owner.)
- Any overhead hazards (i.e., falling rock, soil, or other materials or equipment)?
- Will there be any heavy equipment operating in the near proximity of the excavation?
- Estimated depth required for the excavation?
- How many people will work inside the excavation?
- Is there an escape plan for those inside the excavation to cover a possible cave-in or slide?
- Has there been a soil analysis? This will help determine the type of shoring to provide or the angle of repose needed.

Steps to Take to Provide a Safe Excavating Operation

- Always shore or cut back the opening adequately.
- Any opening with a depth of five feet or more requires shoring or be cut back.
- Never store excavated or other materials closer than two feet from the edge of the excavation.
- Inspect the excavation daily. This must be done by a competent person.
- Access ladders must be provided every twenty-five foot in excavations of four (4) foot or more in depth.
- Review escape procedures with all personnel who may have cause to be in the excavation.

Additional Discussion Notes:

Possible gas accumulation in the excavation?

Barriers, guardrails or other safety warnings in excavation area?

A competent person must inspect the site daily. This includes both excavation and the surrounding area. Inspection Points include but are not limited to:

- Possible cave-in's.
- Failure of protective systems and equipment.
- Hazardous atmosphere.
- Other hazardous conditions (i.e., following rain or man-made condition such as blasting).

Remember

Unlike most accidents, the cave-in of an excavation usually can be predicted if closely watched. It is, therefore, critical that a competent person keeps a close eye on any excavation. Everyone should be removed from the excavation area should it appear to be unstable.

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