

## SAFETY MATTERS CONSTRUCTION SERIES



### TRENCHING AND EXCAVATION



## Unsafe Spoil Pile Placement

### Understanding the Danger

Excavated materials (spoils) at your site are hazardous if they are set too close to the edge of a trench/excavation. The weight of the spoils can cause a cave-in, or spoils and equipment can roll back on top of workers, causing serious injuries or death.

### Avoiding the Hazards

Provide protection by one or more of the following:

- Set spoils and equipment at least 2 feet back from the excavation.
- Use retaining devices, such as a trench box, which will extend above the top of the trench to prevent equipment and spoils from falling back into the excavation.
- Where the site does not permit a 2-foot set back, spoils may need to be temporarily hauled to another location.



Safety Matters Construction Series information is extracted directly from OSHA safety materials. For additional information consult [www.OSHA.gov](http://www.OSHA.gov)