

## SAFETY MATTERS CONSTRUCTION SERIES



### TRENCHING AND EXCAVATION

## Failure to Inspect Trench and Protective Systems

### Understanding the Danger

If trenches and excavations at your site are not inspected daily for evidence of possible cave-ins, hazardous atmospheres, failure of protective systems, or other unsafe conditions, you are in danger.

### Avoiding the Hazards

- Inspect excavations:
  - Before construction begins.
  - Daily before each shift.
  - As needed throughout the shift.
  - Following rainstorms or other hazard-increasing events (such as a vehicle or other equipment approaching the edge of an excavation).
  
- Inspections must be conducted by a competent person who:
  - Has training in soil analysis.
  - Has training in the use of protective systems.
  - Is knowledgeable about the OSHA requirements.
  - Has authority to immediately eliminate hazards.



To help evaluate different protection systems and identify the warning signs of excavation failure, see the "Guide for Daily Inspection of Trenches and Excavations", available at [www.OSHA.gov](http://www.OSHA.gov).

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