Risk Control

Trench Inspection Checklist

Daily inspections of excavations, adjacent areas, and protective systems shall be made by a competent person for evidence of a situation that could result in potential cave-ins, indications of failure of protective systems, hazardous atmospheres, or other hazardous conditions. An inspection shall be conducted by the competent person prior to the start of work, and as needed throughout the shift. Inspections shall also be made after every rainstorm or other hazard-increasing event. These inspections are only required when employee exposure can be reasonably anticipated.

Competent Person: **Date:**	**Yes**	**No**
Is a copy of the Locate Ticket on file?		
Have surface encumbrances (guardrails, utility poles, trees, etc.) that may create a hazard been supported or removed?		
Have all underground facilities (gas, water, sewer, communication, electric, etc.) been marked and physically located?		
Have all underground facilities been protected, supported or removed while the excavation is open to safeguard employees?		
Have adjoining buildings, walls or other structures endangered by excavation operations been supported?		
Has safe means of access and egress (ladder, stairway, ramp, etc.) been placed in trenches greater than **4 feet** in depth?		
Has the ladder or means of access and egress been placed within **25 feet** of every employee working?		
Are ladders extended at least **3 feet** above the point of access and secured?		
Are all employees wearing high-visibility vests or garments?		
Are all employees wearing required protective equipment? (Hard hat, safety glasses, safety shoes, etc.)		
Have employees been trained and instructed to never get beneath suspended loads handled by lifting or digging equipment?		
If there is a potentially hazardous atmosphere, has the air in the trench been tested, and have adequate precautions been taken?		
Is water accumulating in the trench? (If yes, employees shall not work in the trench.)		
Have adequate precautions been taken to remove water from the trench and divert surface water drainage?		
Has the soil been classified as Type A, B or C Soil by the competent person? (Circle Soil Type)		
Have all areas of the trench, deeper than **5 feet** where employees are working, been protected from cave-in by a trench **Shield, Shoring** or **Proper Slope**? (Circle Protection System)		
Are spoil piles, tools and equipment set at least **2 feet** back from the edge of the trench or excavation?		
Has loose rock, unnecessary material and debris in the surrounding work area been removed?		
Have all ladders, trench protection systems (trench shields, shoring) and other equipment been inspected by the competent person for defects before use and removed from service if defects are found?		
Is equipment exposed to overhead power lines and is the proper clearance distance maintained? (0-50kV – 10 feet minimum clearance distance)		
Have the hazards of working in trenches and excavations been clearly communicated to employees and have they been instructed to **never** enter a trench that is unprotected from cave-in?		
Have emergency response measures been identified/developed/created and communicated to employees in the event an injury, incident or utility strike occurs?		

All answers to these above questions should be yes or the situation should be corrected before work begins in the trench.
Ref: 29 CFR 1926, Subpart P: Excavations

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