

PROJECT:	
CLIENT/OWNER:	WEEK ENDING:

CREW NAMES:	CREW SIGNATURES:
SAFETY FACTORS ON CURRENT PROJECT:	
WEEKLY FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT:	
FOREMAN:	SIGNATURE:

EXCAVATION SAFETY 2

For years, every construction excavation that was performed was associated with **HIGH RISK**. By overlooking unknown soil conditions, ground water, adjacent structures, steep embankments, etc., the project could achieve maximum production with less cost and less material to excavate, which then required less backfill. When embankments collapsed, they had to be dug back out or worked around, and if workers were on the ground near the collapse they were crushed or buried alive, it was an accepted risk up into the 1970's. Fortunately for all of us on a construction project today, those days are gone—or are they?

A study done just a couple of years ago shows that **73 Americans** were killed in **construction excavation collapses** and trench cave-ins that year, **500 more died** from other causes in and **around excavations**, and another **7000 were left seriously injured**.

It is almost certain that none of those workers who were killed or injured expected it to happen to them. They either failed to follow established safety regulations, or were not properly trained to identify the hazards.

Gravity works on geological materials such as sand, stone, and clay, just as it does on any quantity of mass in the earth's atmosphere. When improperly stockpiled, or stacked vertically, it's just a matter of time until the material falls over, slides, or collapses under it's own weight.

When a cave-in accident occurs, the likelihood of death is fifteen times greater than from any other type of serious construction accident, however, by following proper excavation procedures, nearly all cave-in accidents are preventable.

For your protection, **OSHA's Revised Construction Standard (Subpart P,1926.650)** clarifies the requirements for the protection of employees, both in and around excavations, and requires, that a "COMPETENT PERSON" be present throughout the entire excavation process. A **COMPETENT PERSON** is one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the work area and surroundings. The **COMPETENT PERSON** can

also identify working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and has the authorization to take prompt corrective action to eliminate them.

By complying with the excavation standards in the State of Nevada and following OSHA requirements, you can perform your excavation activities safely and efficiently, without taking gambles and drastically reducing your risk of serious injury or death. •