

Location: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

TOPIC C057: OPEN TRENCHES

Introduction: Your jobsite can change daily. Excavations can be made quickly with the use of modern machinery. A route that you were able to take one day may be cut off by an open trench the next. Every new job on an unfamiliar jobsite will hold its own hazards, and you need to be aware of them in order to work safely. Each year there are hundreds of injuries and fatalities caused by falls on the job. Open trenches and excavations are especially hazardous on job sites if they're not properly marked or barricaded. They may not even be readily visible if the excavated material has been removed. If you're not alert to your worksite changes you can end up in an excavation with cuts, bruises, broken bones, or worse.

Excavation Operations:

- Any excavation or trench on the jobsite must be properly barricaded or flagged. This must be done as the work progresses to alert all workers and vehicle traffic to the hazard
- A competent person needs to inspect all excavations, surrounding areas, and their protective systems daily for evidence of any hazardous situations
- These inspections must be conducted before work starts, and as needed throughout the shift. Where hazards are found, such as excavations that are improperly barricaded or flagged, any employees who are exposed to those hazards must be removed from the area until the necessary safeguards are provided or restored

Site Guidelines:

- If you notice a trench or excavation that's not properly barricaded or flagged, notify your supervisor and co-workers immediately
- If there's equipment or vehicles working near to, or approaching an excavation, and the edge of the excavation is not clearly visible to the operator, a warning system such as barricades, hand or mechanical signals, or stop logs must be used to prevent accidents
- Avoid operating vehicles or equipment around excavations unless necessary, and the work has been coordinated with the supervisor of trenching operations
- Never attempt to jump across an open trench or excavation. Always go around the excavation, or use walkways if possible
- Never enter a deep trench or excavation unless you're sure that it is properly shored, sloped or benched
- Be aware that trench and excavation banks can fall or cave in with little or no warning. This is especially true during and after wet weather. Stay well back from excavation edges whenever possible
- Don't hand-carry loads around jobsites, especially those with excavations, unless necessary. If you do have to carry material, ensure that you have a clear view of your walking path

Employee Attendance:(Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

These guidelines do not supersede local, state or federal regulations, and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.