Excavation Inspection Checklist

Daily Safety Inspection Guide for Trenches & Excavations

Based on OSHA 29 CFR 1926 Subpart P Requirements

About This Checklist

This inspection checklist helps competent persons conduct required daily inspections of excavations and trenches. OSHA requires inspection by a competent person before each shift and after any hazard-increasing event.

Use this checklist to document inspections of:

- Soil conditions and classification
- Protective system integrity (shoring, shielding, sloping)
- Atmosphere testing and ventilation
- Access and egress points
- Adjacent structures and utilities
- Water accumulation hazards

■ IMPORTANT SAFETY REMINDER

Cave-ins are the greatest risk in excavation work. One cubic yard of soil weighs approximately 3,000 pounds. Never enter an unprotected excavation 5 feet or deeper. Stop work immediately if hazardous conditions are found.

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Daily Excavation Inspection

Date: _____ Time: _____ Weather: _____ Temp: _____

Project Name/Location: _____ Excavation ID/Area: _____

Depth: _____ Width: _____ Length: _____ Competent Person: _____

SOIL CLASSIFICATION (Check One)

- ☐ Type A - Cohesive soil (clay, silty clay)
- ☐ Type B - Cohesive soil (angular gravel, silt)
- ☐ Type C - Granular soil (gravel, sand)
- ☐ Layered - Multiple soil types present

PRE-ENTRY INSPECTION

- ☐ Excavation inspected before workers enter and at start of each shift
- ☐ No evidence of cave-in, slides, or material falling into excavation
- ☐ No signs of water accumulation or seepage
- ☐ No hazardous atmosphere detected (test if >4 ft deep with limited ventilation)
- ☐ Underground utilities located and marked (Call 811 completed)
- ☐ Overhead power lines identified and proper clearances maintained

PROTECTIVE SYSTEMS

System in Use (Check One): ☐ Sloping ☐ Benching ☐ Shoring ☐ Shielding/Trench Box ☐ N/A (<5 ft)

- ☐ Protective system installed per manufacturer specs or engineering design
- ☐ Slope angles appropriate for soil type (Type A: 3/4:1, Type B: 1:1, Type C: 1½:1)
- ☐ Shoring/shielding extends at least 18 inches above excavation edge
- ☐ No visible damage, distortion, or wear on protective system components
- ☐ Shield placed to prevent lateral movement during cave-in

ACCESS & EGRESS

- ☐ Ladder, ramp, or stairway provided within 25 feet of all workers
- ☐ Ladders extend 3 feet above edge of excavation and are secured
- ☐ Ramps used for equipment have cleats or non-skid surface
- ☐ Walkways over excavations have guardrails and toe boards

Inspection Continued & Sign-Off

SURFACE HAZARDS & ENCUMBRANCES

- ☐ Spoil pile placed minimum 2 feet from edge of excavation
- ☐ Equipment and materials kept back from excavation edge
- ☐ Mobile equipment has warning systems when operating near edge
- ☐ Barricades, warning signs, or fencing in place around excavation
- ☐ Adjacent structures inspected for stability and underpinning if needed

HAZARDOUS ATMOSPHERES (If Applicable)

- ☐ Atmosphere tested before entry where hazardous atmosphere exists or may develop
- ☐ Oxygen levels between 19.5% and 23.5%
- ☐ Emergency rescue equipment available (harness, lifeline, retrieval system)
- ☐ Ventilation provided to prevent hazardous atmosphere

DEFICIENCIES OR HAZARDS FOUND

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TAKEN

Excavation Status: ☐ **SAFE FOR ENTRY** ☐ **DO NOT ENTER - UNSAFE CONDITIONS**

Competent Person Certification

I certify that I have inspected this excavation and it meets OSHA requirements for the status indicated above.

Name (Print): _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Competent Person Training Date: _____