



BIE SAFETY ADVISOR

OSHA Announces Safe + Sound Week, August 9-15, 2021

What Is Safe + Sound Week? A nationwide event held each August that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and offers information and ideas on how to keep America's workers safe.

Why Participate? Successful safety and health programs can proactively identify and manage workplace hazards before they cause injury or illness, improving sustainability and the bottom line. Participating in Safe + Sound Week can help get your program started, energize an existing one, or provide a chance to recognize your safety successes.

Who Is Encouraged to Participate? All organizations looking for an opportunity to recognize their commitment to safety are welcome to participate. Last year, more than 3,400 businesses helped to raise awareness about workers' health and safety!

How to Participate? Participating in Safe + Sound Week is easy. To get started, go to www.osha.gov/safeandsoundweek/ and select the activities you would like to do at your workplace. You can host an event just for your workers or host a public event to engage your community. Examples of potential activities and tools to help you plan and promote your events are available. After you've completed your events, you can download a certificate and web badge to recognize your organization and your workers.

Every workplace should have a safety and health program that includes management leadership, worker participation, and a systematic approach to finding and fixing hazards.

Why Health and Safety Programs? According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the rate of worker deaths and reported injuries in the United

States has decreased by more than 60 percent in the past four decades since the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act was passed. However, every year, more than 5,000 workers are killed on the job (a rate of 15 per day), and more than 3.6 million suffer a serious job-related injury or illness.

Serious job-related injuries or illnesses don't just hurt workers and their families, but can hurt business in a variety of ways. Implementing a safety and health program, however, can improve small- and medium-sized businesses' safety and health performance, save money, and improve competitiveness. Safety and health programs help businesses:

- Prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
- Improve compliance with laws and regulations
- Reduce costs, including significant reductions in workers' compensation premiums
- Engage workers
- Enhance social responsibility goals
- Increase productivity and enhance overall business operations

If you are interested in getting a more defined Health and Safety Program started at your company, reference www.osha.gov/safeandsound/safety-and-health-programs



Trench Safety

Working in a trench is one of the most hazardous jobs in construction. Hundreds of people die and thousands are seriously injured each year due to cave-ins.

Soil weighs between 90 and 140 pounds per cubic foot. Therefore, one cubic yard (3 ft. by 3 ft. by 3 ft.) can weigh as much as a small pickup truck. If a person is buried, there is little chance of survival.

There are many things that can affect soil stability, such as the type of soil, water, and vibration. Soils saturated with water and previously disturbed soils are very dangerous to work in or around. But, don't be fooled, even hard soil and rock that appears stable can cave in.

Before entering a trench, the competent person at the jobsite must inspect the trench and the protection system to ensure that the trench is safe to enter. There are recorded incidents of people buried and killed in trenches 3- to 4-ft. deep, so even shallow trenches must be inspected by a competent person before entering.

Trench Safety Tips

- ✓ Locate underground utilities before digging.
- ✓ Enter only trenches that have been sloped at the proper angle, shored, or shielded.
- ✓ Never go outside the area that has been sloped, shored, or shielded, not even for a moment.
- ✓ Eliminate or control water accumulation before entering the trench.
- ✓ Stay alert when working in or near previously disturbed soil conditions.
- ✓ Do not permit vehicles near the edge of the trench.
- ✓ Check regularly for hazardous materials and oxygen levels in the trench.
- ✓ Never allow machines to run unattended.
- ✓ Use a ladder or ramp to get in and out of the trench. Place the ladder inside the protective system.
- ✓ Never climb on shoring or shields. Never ride in equipment buckets or on crane hooks.
- ✓ Wear hard hats when working in or around trenches.
- ✓ Stay out from under raised loads.

About half of the people killed each year in trenches die trying to rescue someone else who has been buried by a cave-in. Call 911 for help. Do not attempt a rescue, unless you have been properly trained in trench-rescue techniques. Remember, if you are buried in a cave-in, your chance of survival is very low.

Always be sure that the trench walls are sloped, shored, or shielded with a trench box and that the trench is safe before you enter.

