



BIE SAFETY ADVISOR

Are you a New York State Certified Excavator?

The Dig Safely New York, Inc. (DSNY) Certified Excavator Program in Safe Digging Best Practices has set a standard for training New York State professional excavators in the proper procedures of excavation. The program teaches students the requirements set forth in New York State Code Rule 753 and the Safe Digging Best Practices that should be used for safe excavation in accordance with the Common Ground Alliance Best Practices. By using experience and actual challenges faced in the field, the course is designed to assist professionals with how to proceed safely and correctly, in spite of the obstacles; because we know that no system is always perfect. There is never complete control in the one-call process by any one party' therefore, DSNY is teaching professional excavators how to control and respond to the obstacles they may encounter during excavation operations.

When a person successfully completes the Dig Safely New York Certified Excavator Program (CEP) in Safe Digging Best Practices and demonstrates a fundamental understanding of the safe digging best practices in accordance with the Common Ground Alliance Best Practices and New York State Code Rule 753, they are certified by the one-call center for five years*.

The program is an interactive course that may be taken in-person or online. This certification combines various learning styles, including audio, visual, and hands-on exercises that allow participants to apply their knowledge into situations and

obstacles that could be encountered in the field. Not only do participants establish or refresh their in-depth knowledge on the law and best practices of safe digging to prevent damages to underground facilities, but also to brand themselves or their companies.

Becoming a certified excavator means you have the knowledge and expertise in safe digging best practices and Code Rule 753. Let your clients, your colleagues, and your competition know with the Certified Excavator Program (CEP) label on your business or resume. Nothing says "I'm the best" like a third-party endorsement. You and/or your business can use this certification as a brand and extract maximum marketing advantages, including specialized marketing materials Dig Safely New York offers to companies that are certified and display an exemplary level of safety in the field.

To learn more about the Certified Excavator Program, [click here](#).

OR

copy and paste the following in your web browser:
<https://www.digsafelynewyork.com/safety-training/certified-excavator-program/program-details>

**Certifications are good for five years as long as the individual successfully attends one (1) free renewal class each year between the year certified and the expiration year. Free renewal classes include any individual/company training requested, any free Excavator Breakfast event, or any of the nine annual Excavator Safety Seminars, hosted each March.*



Monthly Toolbox Talk

EXCAVATION AND TRENCHING

According to the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), "Trench collapses cause dozens of fatalities and hundreds of serious injuries each year." None of those killed or injured expected it to happen to them. They were simply victims who gambled and lost or were not properly trained to identify the hazards.

Remember, gravity works on earth materials such as sand, clay, stone, etc. just as it does on other construction materials. Too often an improperly protected trench or excavation wall will collapse, trapping workers. When a cave-in accident occurs, the likelihood of death is fifteen times greater than from any other type of serious construction accident. By following proper excavation procedures, nearly all cave-in accidents are preventable. OSHA Construction Standards for Excavation can be found in Subpart P 1926.650-652.

WHAT IS AN EXCAVATION?

An excavation is any manmade cut, cavity, trench or depression in an earth surface, formed by earth removal. Employees must be protected from cave-ins except when the excavation is in stable rock or when the excavation is less than 5 feet AND examination by a competent person provides no indication of potential cave in.

PREPLANNING

Any surface encumbrances which may create a hazard to employees must be removed or supported, as necessary, to safeguard employees. The presence of all underground installations such as sewer, telephone, fuel, electric, or water lines must be located prior to opening an excavation. Excavations 4 feet deep or more must have sufficient means of exit and these must be within 25 feet of lateral travel to workers.

PROTECTIVE SYSTEMS

There are three ways to protect against injury from trench collapse - shoring, sloping, and a trench shield or box.

- Shoring is a structure such as a metal hydraulic, mechanical, or timber bracing system that supports the sides of an excavation. A shoring system may include sheeting, bracing and/or jacks.
- Sloping is accomplished by cutting the banks of the excavation back to the angle of repose. At this angle the soil won't slide. This angle varies, and depends on the soil type.
- A trench shield or box is a heavy metal box designed to be placed in a trench; it protect employees inside if the sides of the trench cave in.

COMPETENT PERSON

A competent person is one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has the authorization to take prompt corrective action to eliminate them.

The competent person should have knowledge and training regarding:

- Soil classifications
- Use of protective systems
- OSHA's requirements for excavations

A competent person should be part of preplanning and be present throughout the entire excavation process.

INSPECTIONS

A competent person must inspect the excavation and adjacent areas daily and as conditions change for possible cave-ins, failure of

protective systems, hazardous atmospheres, or any other condition that could present a hazard.

SAFETY REMINDER

By complying with the excavation standards, you can perform your excavation activities safely and efficiently, without 'TAKING GAMBLER'S' or 'DIGGING GRAVES'.

EMPLOYEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

HOW THIS TOPIC APPLIES TO THIS JOB:

ATTENDEES: Print Name / Signature (use back if necessary)

DATE: _____

SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE: _____

JOBSITE / PROJECT: _____

