

811 - Excavation



Basic Crafts Workers Compensation Trust

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What Do We Do Before We Dig?

Call 811 at least 4 working days before we need to dig up something, and they send out a professional locator to mark all buried utilities with spray paint and flags.

Everything is Color Coded:

- **Red** – *Electric*
- **Orange** – *Communications, Telephone/CATV*
- **Blue** – *Potable Water*
- **Green** – *Sewer/Drainage*
- **Yellow** – *Gas/Petroleum Pipe Line*
- **Purple** – *Reclaimed Water*
- **White** – *Premark site of intended excavation <-- This is YOUR task so don't forget to do it before you call!*

Trenching and Excavating

Trenches 5 feet deep or greater require a protective system unless the excavation is made entirely in stable rock. If less than 5 feet deep, a competent person may determine that a protective system is not required. Trenches 20 feet deep or greater require that the protective system be designed by a registered professional engineer or be based on tabulated data prepared and/or approved by a registered professional.

Here are a few things to remember:

- Keep heavy equipment away from trench edges.
- Identify anything that might affect trench stability.
- Keep excavated soil (spoils) and other materials at least 2 feet from trench edges.
- Test for atmospheric hazards such as low oxygen, hazardous fumes and toxic gases when > 4 feet deep.
- Inspect trenches at the start of each shift.
- Always inspect trenches following a rainstorm or whenever there is any water intrusion. Also following any event that could have changed the conditions in the trench
- Do not work under suspended or raised loads and materials.



INTERESTING STATISTICS

- There are nearly 50 trenching deaths annually.
- This number has gone down by 12% from the 1990s, when we lost 58 people a year.
- 68% of these fatalities occurred in small companies with fewer than 50 employees.
- 46% of that number happened in companies with fewer than ten workers.