
Trench collapses cause fatalities and injuries. It only takes a second for a trench to collapse. Take the following precautions to protect workers in trenches.

- Keep rocks, soil, materials and equipment away from the edge of the trench.
- Check with the competent person before entering a trench:
  - With standing or accumulating water.
  - Where there may be a lack of oxygen or hazardous fumes or vapors.
- Never enter a trench that has not been properly inspected. A competent person must inspect the trench and fix problems before work begins.
- A trench doesn't have to be very deep to be dangerous. A cubic yard of dirt equals the weight of a mid-sized car -- it will crush you!
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- Make sure there is a safe way to enter and exit the trench, such as a ladder, ramp or steps.

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