



Trenching and excavation work are some of the most hazardous activities in construction. Cave-ins can occur without warning and are often fatal within seconds. OSHA's Excavation Standard (29 CFR 1926 Subpart P) establishes minimum requirements for trench protection, inspections, and safe access to prevent serious injuries and fatalities. Below is an abbreviated summary of the compliant trenching conditions.

### Trenching by the Numbers

- 1 Foot Trench box away from the side of the excavation
- 18 Inches Must sit up off sloped surface or grade
- 2 Feet Distance away soils piles and equipment must be
- 3 Feet A ladder must extend above the trench box/excavation
- 4 Feet Requires a means of egress
- 5 Feet Requires a protective system
- 6 Feet Must provide fall protection
- 10 Feet Start to be considered a confined space
- 15 Feet If it is wider than this – It is not considered a trench
- 20 Feet If it is deeper than this - Protective system must be designed by engineer
- 25 Feet Maximum distance to travel to a ladder
- 50 Feet Maximum distance between egress points

**NOTE:** Unless tested by an authorized 3<sup>rd</sup> party prior to excavation of soils, field personnel will assume soils are of the **Class C Standard** and will follow such guidelines accordingly.

