



Utility Workers Union of America

When a utility trench caves in, the results are often deadly. That's why our union is focused on preventing tragedy by reviewing safety best practices and providing additional local training wherever necessary.

You have probably heard the slogan many times before. **Slope it. Shore it. Shield it.** But it bears repeating because properly benched, supported and boxed trenches are a matter of life and death.

The UWUA Safety Committee will gladly answer your questions or help your UWUA local provide training in the skills needed to avoid a trench cave-in. You can also reach out to **UWUA Safety Director John "Scotty" MacNeill** at john.macneill@uwua.net for any job safety related concerns.

TRENCHING SAFETY

5 Things You Should Know to Stay Safe



- 1** Ensure there's a safe way to enter and exit.
See 1926.651(c)
- 2** Trenches must have cave-in protection.
See 1926.652(a)
- 3** Keep materials away from the edge of the trench.
See 1926.651(j)
- 4** Look for standing water or other hazards.
See 1926.651(h)
- 5** Never enter a trench unless it has been properly inspected.
See 1926.651(k)

 Occupational Safety and Health Administration WWW.OSHA.GOV/TRENCHING • 800-321-OSHA (6742) • TTY 877-889-5627

The UWUA Safety Committee

Also be sure to familiarize yourself with **OSHA's safety recommendations for trenches and excavations**. In addition to ensuring trenches have cave-in protections, OSHA has materials in English and Spanish that provide guidance regarding other hazards including standing water and materials left too close to the edge of a trench.

Your employer has a responsibility to provide a safe workplace and required protective equipment. UWUA members can count on support from our union in order to ensure that utilities are living up to this obligation. That type of advocacy is also part of the safety committee's mission.

In Solidarity,

The Utility Workers Union of America