

Excavations

All excavations, irrespective of depth, which could collapse must be either supported or battered to a safe angle.

- Do not excavate anywhere unless you have a Ground Disturbance Permit for the works.
- There is only one exception to this requirement and that is when Interserve and you know that no services are present. If you don't know for sure, you need a permit.
- **Make sure** that the electric, water, gas and other services have been located and are clearly marked before digging.
- Almost all excavations need to be supported or properly battered back/benched. This will be detailed in the method statement. Do not enter any excavations unless you know the support is in place, in order, and inspected.
- Ladders, stairs or other safe access **must** be used for safe access and egress.
- Effective barriers **must** be placed around all excavations.
- If you smell anything unusual, report this to your supervisor and leave the excavation.
- Running water in excavations could be contaminated so wear protective clothing ie: Wellington boots.
- Spoil heaps, materials, tools and vehicles **must** be kept away from the edge of excavations.
- When tipping into excavations secured stop blocks **are** required to prevent vehicles running into the excavation. People in the excavation must keep clear of the areas where tipping is being undertaken.
- **Do not** jump across excavations; walkways with guardrails as necessary should be provided.
- **Do not** alter or **remove** any supports in an excavation.
- Before going back into an excavation, make sure your supervisor has checked that the support system is still safe for you to enter.
- Kneeling or bending in an excavation can make shallow trenches deadly due to the possibility of low-lying gases.

Questions:

- 1 When does an excavation need to be supported?
- 2 What method of access to excavation is to be used?
- 3 When do stop blocks need to be used?

Remember:

**A cubic metre of earth weighs at least 1.85 tonnes.
The only body that can support that is a dead body.**

Further Information:- CIP Manual, Section 8B