

Section 5A: Safety Management Systems

Policy #6: Trenching & Excavation Safety Program

Effective Date: October 20, 2015

I. Purpose

The Trenching and Excavation program was developed to protect employees from a wide variety of safety hazards that may be encountered during the trenching and excavation process. This program is intended to assure that employees who perform work in trenching and excavations are aware of their responsibilities and know how to perform the work safely. Preventing future workplace injuries in the Town of Mooresville is the principle purpose of this document. This policy will provide a basis for ensuring that all procedures implemented, revised, or modified to meet the Town's requirements for safety.

II. Scope

The Trenching and Excavation Safety Program pertains to all town projects and/or contracts that require any trenches or excavations as defined in Section VI of this policy. Trenching and Excavation work can present serious hazards to all workers involved. This document provides the practices and procedures necessary to adequately control the hazards associated with this task to protect employees, citizens and contractors.

III. Definitions

Accepted engineering practices: the standards of practice required by a registered professional engineer.

Aluminum hydraulic shoring: a manufactured shoring system consisting of aluminum hydraulic cylinders (crossbraces) used with vertical rails (uprights) or horizontal rails (wales). This system is designed to support the sidewalls of an excavation and prevent cave-ins.

Bell-bottom pier hole: a type of shaft or footing excavation, the bottom of which is made larger than the cross section above to form a bell shape.

Benching system: a method of protecting employees from cave-ins by excavating the sides of an excavation to form one or more horizontal steps, usually with vertical or near-vertical surfaces between levels.

Cave-in: the movement of soil or rock into an excavation, or the loss of soil from under a trench shield or support system, in amounts large enough to trap, bury, or injure and immobilize a person.

Cohesive Soil: means clay (fine grained soil), or soil with a high clay content, which has cohesive strength. Cohesive soil does not crumble, can be excavated with vertical side-slopes, and is plastic when moist. Cohesive soil is hard to break up when dry, and exhibits significant cohesion when submerged. Cohesive soils include clayey silt, sandy clay, silty clay, clay and organic clay.

Competent person: a person who has been trained to identify hazards in the workplace, or working conditions that are unsafe for employees, and who has the authority to have these hazards corrected.

Cross braces: the horizontal members of a shoring system installed from side to side of the excavation. The cross braces bear against either uprights or wales.

Excavation: any man-made cut, cavity, trench, or depression in an earth surface formed by earth removal.