

Trenching & Excavation Safety Inspection Checklist

Site / Project	_____	Address	_____
Inspector name	_____	Company	_____
Date	_____	Time	_____

Documentation aid only. Adapt this resource to the site, manufacturer instructions, and applicable local requirements. It does not replace a competent person, professional judgment, legal advice, or a required statutory form.

Inspection checklist

Pre-Excavation Assessment & Planning

☐ Is a 'Competent Person' (as defined by OSHA 1926.650(b)) identified and present on site?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Have all underground utilities (gas, electric, water, sewer) been located and marked prior to excavation (811 One-Call system)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Has a 'Competent Person' classified the soil type (Type A, B, or C) according to OSHA 1926 Appendix A?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Is the protective system (sloping, shoring, trench box) designed by a registered professional engineer if deeper than 20 feet, or if conditions warrant?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Are safe means of egress (ladder, ramp, stairs) provided every 25 feet of lateral travel in the trench?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Is there a system in place to control water accumulation in the trench (e.g., pumps, drainage)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Is atmospheric testing conducted before entry if a hazardous atmosphere (e.g., low oxygen, toxic gases) could reasonably be expected?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Is a daily inspection of the excavation, protective systems, and adjacent areas conducted by the 'Competent Person'?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐ Are emergency rescue procedures and equipment (e.g., confined space rescue) readily available?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____

☐	Is there a site-specific excavation safety plan readily available and understood by all workers?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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Trench Shield (Trench Box) Inspection

☐	Is the trench shield (trench box) properly certified for the depth and soil conditions?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is the trench shield free from damage (e.g., cracks, bends, corrosion) that could compromise its structural integrity?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is the trench shield installed according to the manufacturer's specifications and OSHA requirements?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is the trench shield placed so that the bottom edge extends at least 18 inches below the top of the excavation?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are voids between the trench shield and the excavation wall properly backfilled to prevent soil movement?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is safe access and egress provided to and from the trench shield?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are lifting lugs on the trench shield in good condition and properly rated for the weight of the box?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are manufacturer's specifications for the trench box readily available on site?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are trench box panels securely pinned or connected per manufacturer's instructions?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is there visual proof (photos/video) that the trench box is installed correctly before crews enter?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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Spoil Pile Management & Site Conditions

☐	Is the spoil pile located at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) from the edge of the excavation?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is the spoil pile stable and prevented from sliding or rolling back into the excavation?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are surface encumbrances (e.g., rocks, trees, debris) that could create a hazard removed or supported?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Is equipment or machinery prevented from operating near the edge of the excavation unless precautions are taken to prevent cave-ins?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are warning systems (e.g., barricades, signs) in place to alert workers and the public to the excavation hazard?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
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☐	Are adjacent structures (buildings, roadways) protected from the effects of the excavation?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Are weather conditions (rain, freezing temperatures) monitored for their potential impact on soil stability?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Is water being effectively removed from the excavation to prevent soil saturation and instability?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Is adequate traffic control in place to protect workers from vehicular traffic?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Is ground vibration from nearby equipment or traffic monitored to prevent soil destabilization?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

☐	Are all workers wearing properly fitted hard hats (ANSI Z89.1)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Are all workers wearing appropriate eye protection (ANSI Z87.1) for the hazards present (e.g., flying debris, chemical splash)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Are all workers wearing high-visibility clothing (ANSI 107) if exposed to vehicular traffic?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Are all workers wearing appropriate foot protection (ANSI Z41) for the hazards present (e.g., puncture hazards, falling objects)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Is respiratory protection (NIOSH approved) required and used if a hazardous atmosphere is present?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Are workers wearing appropriate gloves for the tasks being performed (e.g., cut-resistant, chemical-resistant)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Is hearing protection available and used if noise levels exceed permissible exposure limits (PEL)?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Are fall protection harnesses inspected before each use for damage or defects?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Is all PPE maintained in good condition and replaced when damaged or worn?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____
☐	Have all workers been trained on the proper use, care, and limitations of their PPE?	☐ Pass	☐ Fail	☐ N/A	Notes: _____

Findings

#	Item	Location	Severity	Action required
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

Signature

Inspector signature _____

Name _____

Date _____