

Take control

Unspecified mechanisms of injury

Slide or cave in >

This information bulletin has been produced to assist in the prevention of workplace injury and disease. By identifying causes and assessing and controlling risks employers and workers can take control of health and safety in the workplace.

Risk indicators in the workplace

Some things to look for include:

- Unstable ground and structures;
- Excavated material kept too close to a trench or top of a pile;
- Loading of the edge of a trench with, for example, vehicles, machinery and other materials;
- The presence of water and poor weather conditions;
- A lack of walk ways forcing people to walk or jump over a trench;
- A lack of, or missing shoring or supports in a trench or at a pile;
- Vibration caused by machines or heavy plant operating nearby;
- Unstable piles of dirt and rubble.

Examples of what can be done to stop such occurrences from happening

Employers should, for example; make sure that:

- The site is carefully examined and prepared before excavating work begins by a competent person;
- Regular work site inspections are conducted in order to identify any signs of potential cave-in or slide, such as overstressing in the support work or damage to shoring or timber;
- The work site is fully supervised;
- Excavated material and equipment is kept well away from the edge of trenching or the top of a pile;
- No worker is allowed in trenches unless, for example the side walls have been battened and inclined and the sides shored (using appropriate materials);
- Water is collected and pumped away or diverted from the site; and
- Personal protective equipment, such as safety helmets is worn on the site.

putting safety first >



To find out more

The [Workplace Health and Safety Act](#) and the [Workplace Health and Safety Regulations](#) outline the minimum standards and the process to manage occupational health and safety in your workplace.

Specific regulations to note in respect of this topic are:

Regulation 145	Shoring
Regulation 61	Design, manufacture and supply of confined space
Regulation 61A	Control of risks resulting from entry to a confined space

[Australian Standards](#) are available from the Territory Construction Association, phone 8922 9666. Australian Standards can be viewed online by visiting the Northern Territory Library, Parliament House, phone 8999 7177.

Australian Standards applicable to this topic include:

AS 1725	Galvanised Rail-less Chainware Security Fences and Gates Trenching Excavation Work
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Work Health kindly acknowledges WorkCover SA.

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