IRONLOT
TRENCH SAFETY

THE 6 RULES OF TRENCH SAFETY

A practical 1-2-3-4-5-6 field reminder

1 ONE COMPETENT PERSON

A designated competent person must inspect the excavation before work and as needed throughout the shift, including after rainstorms or changed conditions.

2 TWO FEET BACK

Keep excavated soil, materials, and equipment at least 2 feet from the trench edge to help prevent falling debris and additional pressure on trench walls.

3 THREE FEET ABOVE

When a portable ladder is used to access an upper landing, its side rails must extend at least 3 ft above the landing, unless an allowed alternative is provided.

4 SAFE ACCESS AT FOUR FEET

For trenches 4 ft deep or more, provide a safe means of egress so workers travel no more than 25 ft laterally to reach it.

5 PROTECTION AT FIVE FEET

Provide a protective system at 5 ft or deeper, unless the excavation is entirely in stable rock. Shallower excavations may also need protection.

6 SIX-INCH BOX GAP

Keep the space between a trench shield and trench wall as small as practicable; a 6-in. maximum is a field recommendation, NOT a universal OSHA limit. Follow the shield manufacturer's instructions.

This is a memory aid, not a substitute for OSHA requirements, manufacturer tabulated data, or the direction of a competent person.

336-516-8011

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Source: Iron Lot - Excavation Safety Basics: The 6 Rules of Trench Safety