

OH&S 17-7 (5) – 17-7 (7)

Protection against cave-in of trenches

17-7(1) If a worker is present in a trench that is more than 1.2 metres deep, an employer or contractor shall ensure that the worker is protected from cave-ins or sliding material by:

- (a) cutting back the upper portion of the walls of the trench in accordance with subsection 17-4(2);
- (b) installing a temporary protective structure; or
- (c) a combination of cutting back the walls to the slope specified in subsection 17-4(2) and installing a temporary protective structure that extends at least 300 millimetres above the base of the cut-back.

(2) An employer or contractor shall ensure that a temporary protective structure required by clause (1)(b) or (c) is:

- (a) designed and installed using shoring made of number 1 structural grade spruce lumber having the dimensions set out in Table 14 of the Appendix for the type of soil and the depth of the trench or made of material of equivalent or greater strength; or
- (b) designed by a professional engineer and constructed, installed, used, maintained and dismantled in accordance with that design.

(3) An employer or contractor shall ensure that a temporary protective structure in a trench more than 6 metres deep in type 1, type 2 or type 3 soil or in a trench more than 4 metres deep in type 4 soil is designed and certified as safe by a professional engineer and installed, used, maintained and dismantled in accordance with that design.

(4) An employer or contractor shall ensure that:

- (a) shoring is installed and removed in a manner that protects workers from cave-ins and structural collapses and from being struck by shoring components;
- (b) shoring components are securely connected together to prevent sliding, falling, kickouts or other possible failure; and
- (c) individual components of shoring are not subjected to loads that exceed the loads the components were designed to bear.

(5) If a worker is in a trench that is more than 1.2 metres deep, an employer or contractor shall ensure that a competent worker is stationed on the surface to alert the worker in the trench about the development of any potentially unsafe conditions and to provide assistance in an emergency.

(6) If a worker is required to enter a trench, an employer or contractor shall:

- (a) install ladders, stairways or ramps to provide a safe means of entrance to and exit from the trench; and
- (b) ensure that the ladder, stairway or ramp is located not more than 8 metres from a worker working in the trench.

(7) An employer or contractor shall ensure that workers are instructed in and comply with the requirements of this section.