



## Suggestions to Prepare for a Successful Trench Safety Stand-Down

1. **Start early.** Make everyone in your organization know that this is your top priority. Designate a coordinator to organize the stand-down. If you have multiple work sites, identify the team that will lead the stand-down at each site. Identify members of your management team that will participate in conducting the stand-downs. Assign different managers (upper and middle managers, project managers, estimators, etc.) to separate projects during the stand-down to reinforce the commitment of your company leadership.
2. **Request subcontractors, owner, architects, engineers, or others** associated with your projects to participate in the stand-down.
3. **Review your trench/excavation safety program.** This will help provide a more effective stand-down.
  - a. *What types of incidents could happen?*
    - Cave-ins
    - Struck-by
    - Trips and falls
    - Materials handling
    - Other
  - b. *What needs improvement?* Is your program meeting its goals? Are you experiencing fatalities, injuries, or near misses? Are employees aware of the company's trenching/excavation procedures?
  - c. *What training have you provided to your workers?* Does it need revision?
  - d. *What equipment have you provided to your workers?* Is better equipment available?
4. **Decide when to hold the stand-down and how long it will last.** Decide if the stand-down will take place over a break, a lunch period, or some other time. Set a date and time for your company wide stand-down and announce it in advance so managers can plan for it.
5. **Develop presentations or activities that will meet your needs.** Decide what information will be best for your workplace and workers. The meeting should provide information to workers about hazards, protective methods, and the company's safety policies, goals and expectations. Provide stand-down information and materials in advance to persons who will be responsible for providing the stand-down. Plan to involve employees in the discussion and see if they have any concerns or suggestions. Hands-on exercises (a worksite walk around, equipment checks, etc.) can increase retention.
6. **Promote the stand-down.** Demonstrate a strong commitment and promote the importance of trench safety. Place flyers and posters at your jobsites to promote trench safety and the safety stand-down. Inform everyone on your jobsites of the upcoming safety stand-down so managers and workers can plan around it. This will be a companywide stand-down and everyone is expected to participate, including all managers. Some employers find that serving snacks and lunch increases participation.

7. **Ask workers (crews) to audit their respective work areas and identify hazards** before the stand-down.
8. **Hold your stand-down.** Use the materials you select in advance of the stand-down. Make the stand-down interesting to workers. Try to make it positive and interactive. Discuss the findings of their audits. Let workers talk about their experiences and encourage them to make suggestions.
9. **Follow up.** If you learned something that could improve your trench/excavation program, make the necessary changes. Identify and control unsafe work practices and conditions.