

IMPLEMENTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 2015:
Better Regulation - Plant, Structures and Working at Heights

EXCAVATION WORK



You'll be interested in this fact sheet if you are in the construction sector and /or:

- > commission excavation work
- > carry out excavation work
- > are a territorial authority or utility provider that maintains underground services.

In Section 7 of the discussion paper we set out some of the problems we see with the regulation of excavations and we propose some changes to existing regulations.

Excavations remain a persistent source of risk for the construction sector...

Trenching work and excavations can result in a range of injuries and fatalities, not all of which result from falls of ground or trench collapse.

Excavations and trenches pose risks of collapsing and burying workers, falls into them, unsafe atmospheres, water and other hazards, and the danger of striking underground services.

There is increasing availability and use of excavation machinery, which means more excavations completed, which are larger, and often more complex.

There has also been more use made of proprietary trench shoring systems, but fencing and enclosure of trenching remains variable, and strikes of underground services continue at high levels compared with overseas, and at considerable cost.



We've heard there are some problems with how excavation work is being completed...

Continued risk of harms from collapse or falls into trenches, and incidents involving strikes of underground services

Greater availability of excavation machines has increased the frequency, size and complexity of excavation work

Variation in industry practice e.g. for fencing, or obtaining information about underground services

Existing regulations have extensive coverage but contain little detail

We want to hear your views on these and any other issues that you think could be addressed to make excavation work safer.

Here are some ideas we're proposing for the regulation of excavation work. Tell us what you think.

Apply the Prescribed Risk Management Process to excavation work

Require that during excavation work

- › Risks from falling in, being trapped by collapse, falling objects, and airborne contaminants are systematically managed
- › Unauthorised access is prevented
- › For trenches deeper than 1.5m the risk of collapse is minimised by shoring (unless authorised by a competent person/ engineer)
- › of scaffolding componentry (see section 5)

Create a duty to check for underground services before excavating

An express duty for the PCBU with management or control of the workplace to take all reasonable steps to obtain underground services information before excavations commence

With your help, we want to get this right

Based on your experience and information, we want to know what proposals and options you think will be most effective to achieve the change we want to see for workers and businesses.

Tell us what is going to work in practice and how it will impact you, your workers, or your business. Your feedback will help us identify the best options for change and inform the government's final policy decisions.

Make a submission at www.mbie.govt.nz/plant-and-structures