

## Trench Rescue Emergency Procedures

When things go wrong, people may be exposed to serious and immediate danger. Panic can lead to additional injuries or even multiple fatalities. Effective arrangements for raising the alarm and carrying out rescue operations in an emergency are essential.

Step 1 - Don't Panic, try to remain cool. The competent person will take charge. Notify 911 or EMS. Notify Competent Person if not in immediate area.

### *Considerations - Communications*

How does the crew communicate with the outside world in event of a problem. Don't forget night and shift work, weekends and times when the premises are closed, eg holidays. Also, consider what might happen and how the alarm can be raised.

Step 2 - Assess the situation - Note exact time, note number and location of workers.

*Considerations* - Approach the trench from short wall (end) not the long wall or collapsed area. You don't want to cause additional collapse.

Step 3 - Get workers not trapped out of trench. Leave all tools in place. Tool location can assist in finding buried workers.

Step 4 - Shut down all equipment and stop any nearby traffic that can cause vibration and aggravate the situation.

Step 5 - Keep all personnel 50' away to prevent further cave in. Start pumps immediately if ground water is a consideration.

Step 6 - Prepare for rescue personnel (EMS, fire dept, etc.) They will need to know:

- How deep is the trench?
- The type of soil?
- How much has collapsed?
- Number of People trapped?
- How much soil is covering victim?
- How long have they been trapped?
- Types of utilities involved (if any), are hazardous utilities damaged?
- Are conditions stable?
  - potential for additional collapse
  - potential for flooding
  - condition of surrounding soil

Remember - A plan in a book is just paper. To work it must be communicated and practised.  
Ensure the proper tools, skills and training are on the job.