

EHS Today

Contractor Cited For Trenching Violations

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S.J. Louis employees were working in a 17-foot deep excavation in Gregory, Texas, with only one trench box that had been improperly installed and was bowed from the pressure of the trench walls.

OSHA regulations require that, after five feet in depth, the employer is required to protect the trench by cutting the trench wider or another appropriate alternative method.

The employees also had to climb down the back wall of the excavation and jump approximately 5 feet to the bottom of the trench. OSHA regulations require that anytime there is a break of 19 inches, in elevation, the employer must provide a ladder or stairs.

OSHA cited the company with seven serious violations for failing to inspect the excavation, not following the manufacturers use of the trench box and not providing ladders.

OSHA also cited the company with two repeat violations for not protecting employees working in an excavation and not providing safe access and egress to the excavation.

S.J. Louis Construction has 15 working days, from receipt of the citations to comply.

by Virginia Sutcliffe

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