

# A Safe Workplace

## A Workplace Safety and Health Manual for Your Community

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		Approved By: Harvey Bostrom
Subject: G-4	Excavation	Effective: April 01, 2005
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**PPE Required:** Steel-toe boots, safety glasses, hearing protection, hard hat, coveralls, gloves.

This procedure applies to every workplace where excavation work takes place but does not apply to a mine as defined in *The Mines and Minerals Act* or burial lot or plot in a cemetery as defined in the *Cemeteries Act*.

### Preparation:

1. Before any excavation work begins:

Refer to part 26 of *The Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulations* and the Manitoba Guidelines for Excavation Work.

- the area must be assessed for potential hazards (floods, atmosphere etc) and all employees made aware of the hazards related to the excavation. See *Fall Protection Procedure* (section III-C-G12) and *Confined Space Procedure* (section, III-C-G9);
  - all excavation work, regardless of depth must be performed by a “registered excavator”. In order to become registered, an excavation contractor (including community council) must contact the department of Labour & Immigration, WSH Division in order to obtain a registration number.
  - contact the Department of Labour and Immigration 48 hours in advance of excavation work that is more than 1.5 meters deep and provide information as is requested. In which workers will be permitted to enter;
  - give notice to all public utilities (gas, oil, steam, hydro, telephone, water and sewer, etc.). Ensure that owners of the utilities have conspicuously marked the location of the utilities and that information, instructions and documents are provided that may affect excavation. Information must be kept at the work site. Call Before You Dig (204) 480-1212, [www.hydro.mb.ca](http://www.hydro.mb.ca) 1-888-624-9376;
  - give notice to public of excavation work to be completed 48 hours prior to digging an excavation that will be more than 1.5 meters deep in which a worker will be permitted to enter. 48 hours does not count over weekends;
2. No employee should operate equipment or machinery that will endanger the stability of the walls of an excavation.
3. Use the *Barricade Procedure* (section III-C-G6) to separate motorists and pedestrians from

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the work area and to secure the excavation site.

4. For excavations more than 3 meters deep, ensure that an excavation it is adequately guarded by a fence, guardrail or covering to prevent employees from falling in.
5. A safe means of entering and leaving an excavation must be provided. For excavations or trenches more than 1.5 meters deep, a ladder, stairway or ramp must be provided;
  - If a ladder is used it must:
    - extend 1 meter above the top of the excavation or trench; and
    - be located not more than 3 meters from the employee, when a ladder is used in a trench.

### Steps:

- 1. If there is exposure, contact with or damage to an underground utility when excavation is performed, immediately evacuate all employees until the hazard or unsafe condition has been safety addressed and notify the owner of the utility.**
2. For excavations exceeding 1.5 meters, slope the walls at a grade of 1:1 (45 degrees) after the first meter. Ensure soil pile is 1 meter or more from the edge of the excavation. When this is not possible, use *Trench Shoring Procedure* (section III-C-G5).
- 3. If leaving excavation open overnight, cover and fence the excavation.**

Note additional information can be found on the Department of Labour and Immigration website [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/guidelines](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/guidelines) in the [Guidelines for Excavation Work](#).