

Excavations and Buried Services — Risk Assessment

Site-specific. Complete, sign, review. Delete rows that do not apply.

Assessor: _____ Site: _____ Date: _____ Review due: _____

Hazard	Who is harmed and how	Controls required	Further action	Done
Collapse of the sides	Anyone in the excavation. Crushing, asphyxiation, death. A cubic metre of soil weighs over a tonne	Batter, bench or support EVERY excavation people enter. Never judge by eye. Support installed as the dig progresses, not afterwards		
Striking a buried electricity cable	Anyone digging. Severe burns, arc flash, death	Plans obtained AND a cable avoidance tool used AND safe digging practice. All three, not one of them. Hand dig near known services		
Striking a gas main	Everyone in the area. Explosion, asphyxiation	Same three controls. Evacuate, no ignition sources, call the emergency number immediately		
Striking water, sewer or fibre	Anyone nearby. Flooding, contamination, huge cost	Plans and locator. Report immediately		
Material or objects falling in	Anyone below. Head and crush injury	Spoil kept at least a metre back from the edge. Toe boards. Nothing stored at the edge		
People or vehicles falling in	Anyone on site. Crush, fall	Barriers all round. Stop blocks for vehicles. Lighting at night		
Excavation used as an unplanned confined space	Anyone entering. Asphyxiation from gas ingress or oxygen deficiency	Gas monitoring where there is any risk. Never enter a deep excavation without assessing the atmosphere		
Water ingress and undermining	Anyone in the excavation. Sudden collapse	Pumping, and re-inspect after any rain. Rain is an event affecting stability		
Undermining adjacent structures or scaffold	Everyone nearby. Structural collapse	Assess before digging near foundations, walls or scaffold feet		
No safe way in or out	Anyone in it. Trapped in an emergency	Secured ladders at suitable intervals		

Assessor	Reviewed by	Date	Review due

Scope and limitations — read before use

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