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Cave-in buries worker waist-deep in trench

One month later: company still has no cave-in protection

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[OSHA](#) has cited Taylor's Drain and Sewer Service in Lincoln, Neb. for ten safety violations after a worker was buried waist deep when a 9' trench he was working in collapsed. The worker suffered a serious injury in the March, 2013 incident and required surgery.

The company did not abate a similar hazard at a different job site; in April, two Taylor workers at another location were observed in a 10-foot-deep trench without protection. The company was installing water and sewer lines at both locations.

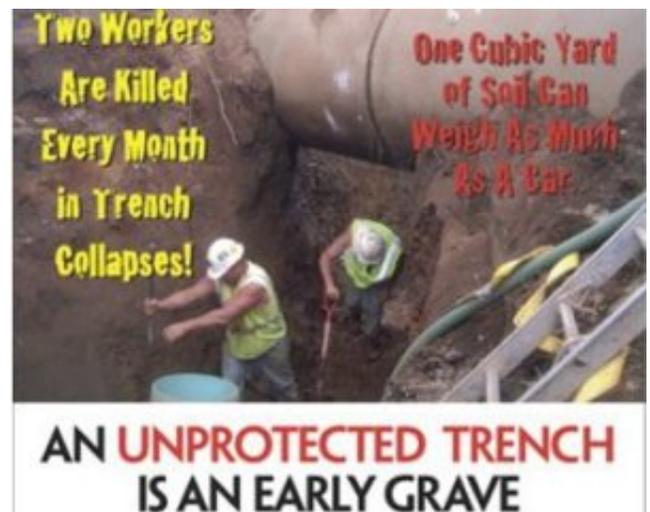
[OSHA](#) found that the company failed to protect workers from cave-ins during trenching operations.

"No excuse"

"Cave-ins are the leading cause of injury and death during excavations," said OSHA chief Dr. David Michaels. "Taylor Drain and Sewer Service failed to provide basic safety precautions, which led to the serious injury of one of its workers. This employer had no excuse for noncompliance."

The company was cited for failing to:

- develop and implement a written hazardous communication program
- provide workers with hazard recognition [training](#)
- protect workers from exposed underground utilities
- provide a means of safe access and egress during trenching and excavation work
- provide a competent person for trench inspection prior to worker entry and provide trench cave-in protection.
- provide cave-in protection to workers in a trench more than 5-feet-deep



- provide a competent person for trench inspection prior to worker entry
- failing to provide a means of safe access and egress during trenching and excavation work
- protect workers from struck-by hazards, including spoil piles of soil placed less than two feet from the edge of the trench

Proposed penalties total \$194,000.

OSHA standards mandate that all excavations 5 feet or deeper be protected against collapse. Detailed information on trenching and excavation hazards is available [here](#).

OSHA has placed Taylor's Drain and Sewer Services Inc. in its Severe Violator Enforcement Program, which mandates targeted follow-up inspections to ensure compliance with the law. The program focuses on recalcitrant employers that endanger workers by committing willful, repeat or failure-to-abate violations.