

Trenching and Excavation: Ingress/Egress

To avoid fall injuries during normal entry and exit of a trench or excavation at your job site, ladders, stairways, or ramps are required. In some circumstances, when conditions in a trench or excavation become hazardous, survival may even depend on how quickly you can climb out.

How Do I Avoid Hazards?

Provide stairways, ladders, ramps, or other safe means of egress in all trenches that are 4 feet deep or more.

Position means of egress within 25 lateral feet of workers.

Structural ramps that are used solely for access or egress from excavations must be designed by a competent person.

When two or more components form a ramp or runway, they must be connected to prevent displacement, and be of uniform thickness.

Cleats or other means of connecting runway components must be attached in a way that would not cause tripping (e.g., to the bottom of the structure).

Structural ramps used in place of steps must have a non-slip surface.

Use earthen ramps as a means of egress only if a worker can walk them in an upright position, and only if they have been evaluated by a competent person.



These workers are not protected from a cave-in, nor do they have any apparent safe access or egress from the trench.

