

Town of Bedford
Department of Public Works
314 The Great Road
Bedford, MA 01730
Phone (781) 275-7605 Fax (781) 275-9010

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Pursuant to G.L. c. 82A §1 and 520 CMR 14.00 et seq.
(as amended)



TRENCH PERMIT

This Section For Official Use Only

Permit Number: _____

Date Issued: _____

Dig Safe Number : _____

SECTION 1 - SITE INFORMATION

1.1 Property Address:

Street Name _____

1.2 Description, location and purpose of proposed trench:

1.3 Anticipated Trench Operation:

Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

SECTION 2 - PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND PERMIT HOLDER INFORMATION

2.1 Property Owner of Record:

Name: (Print) _____ Address _____

Signature _____ Telephone: _____

2.2 Excavator Information:

Company Name _____

Excavator Name: (Print) _____ Company Address _____

Signature: _____ Telephone:/Emergency Contact Number _____

2.3 Name and Contact Information of Insurer:

Company Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City/Town _____

Insurance Certificate #: _____ Policy Expiration Date _____

BY SIGNING THIS FORM, THE APPLICANT/EXCAVATOR AND OWNER, ACKNOWLEDGE AND CERTIFY THAT THEY ARE FAMILIAR WITH, OR, BEFORE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WORK, WILL BECOME FAMILIAR WITH, ALL LAWS AND REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO WORK PROPOSED, INCLUDING OSHA REGULATIONS, G.L. c. 82A, 520 CMR 7.00 et seq., AND ANY APPLICABLE MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES, BY-LAWS AND REGULATIONS AND THEY COVENANT AND AGREE THAT ALL WORK DONE UNDER THE PERMIT ISSUED FOR SUCH WORK WILL COMPLY THEREWITH IN ALL RESPECTS AND WITH THE CONDITIONS SET FORTH BELOW.

THE UNDERSIGNED OWNER AUTHORIZES THE APPLICANT/EXCAVATOR TO APPLY FOR THE PERMIT AND THE EXCAVATOR TO UNDERTAKE SUCH WORK ON THE PROPERTY OF THE OWNER, AND ALSO, FOR THE DURATION OF CONSTRUCTION, AUTHORIZES PERSONS DULY APPOINTED BY THE MUNICIPALITY TO ENTER UPON THE PROPERTY TO MONITOR AND INSPECT THE WORK FOR CONFORMITY WITH THE CONDITIONS ATTACHED HERETO AND THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING SUCH WORK.

THE UNDERSIGNED APPLICANT/EXCAVATOR AND OWNER AGREE JOINTLY AND SEVERALLY TO REIMBURSE THE MUNICIPALITY FOR ANY AND ALL COSTS AND EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE MUNICIPALITY IN CONNECTION WITH THIS PERMIT AND THE WORK CONDUCTED THEREUNDER, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ENFORCING THE REQUIREMENTS OF STATE LAW AND CONDITIONS OF THIS PERMIT, INSPECTIONS MADE TO ASSURE COMPLIANCE THEREWITH, AND MEASURES TAKEN BY THE MUNICIPALITY TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC WHERE THE APPLICANT OWNER OR EXCAVATOR HAS FAILED TO COMPLY THEREWITH INCLUDING POLICE DETAILS AND OTHER REMEDIAL MEASURES DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE MUNICIPALITY.

THE UNDERSIGNED APPLICANT/EXCAVATOR AND OWNER AGREE JOINTLY AND SEVERALLY TO DEFEND, INDEMNIFY, AND HOLD HARMLESS THE MUNICIPALITY AND ALL OF ITS AGENTS AND EMPLOYEES FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY, CAUSES OR ACTION, COSTS, AND EXPENSES RESULTING FROM OR ARISING OUT OF ANY INJURY, DEATH, LOSS, OR DAMAGE TO ANY PERSON OR PROPERTY DURING THE WORK CONDUCTED UNDER THIS PERMIT. .

THE FOLLOWING PERSON IS TO BE CONTACTED IN THE EVENT OF A TRENCH REPAIR/FAILURE:

NAME

TELEPHONE

EXCAVATOR SIGNATURE

DATE _____

OWNER'S SIGNATURE (IF DIFFERENT)

DATE _____

For City/Town use -- Do not write in this section

PERMIT APPROVED BY _____

- PERMITTING AUTHORITY
- Code Enforcement Officer
 - Director of Public Works
 - Engineer
 - Fire Department

Date _____

CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS PURSUANT TO G.L.C.82A AND 520 CMR 14.00 et seq. (as amended)

By signing the application, the applicant/excavator understands and agrees to comply with the following:

- i. No trench may be excavated unless the requirements of sections 40 through 40D of chapter 82, and any accompanying regulations, have been met and this permit is invalid unless and until said requirements have been complied with by the excavator applying for the permit including, but not limited to, the establishment of a valid excavation number with the underground plant damage prevention system as said system is defined in section 76D of chapter 164 (DIG SAFE);
- ii. Trenches may pose a significant health and safety hazard. Pursuant to Section 1 of Chapter 82 of the General Laws, an excavator shall not leave any open trench unattended without first making every reasonable effort to eliminate any recognized safety hazard that may exist as a result of leaving said open trench unattended. Excavators should consult regulations promulgated by the Department of Public Safety in order to familiarize themselves with the recognized safety hazards associated with excavations and open trenches and the procedures required or recommended by said department in order to make every reasonable effort to eliminate said safety hazards which may include covering, barricading or otherwise protecting open trenches from accidental entry.
- iii. Persons engaging in any in any trenching operation shall familiarize themselves with the federal safety standards promulgated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on excavations: 29 CFR 1926.650 et.seq., entitled Subpart P "Excavations".
- iv. Excavators engaging in any trenching operation who utilize hoisting or other mechanical equipment subject to chapter 146 shall only employ individuals licensed to operate said equipment by the Department of Public Safety pursuant to said chapter and this permit must be presented to said licensed operator before any excavation is commenced;
- v. By applying for, accepting and signing this permit, the applicant hereby attests to the following: (1) that they have read and understands the regulations promulgated by the Department of Public Safety with regard to construction related excavations and trench safety; (2) that he has read and understands the federal safety standards promulgated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on excavations: 29 CFR 1926.650 et.seq., entitled Subpart P "Excavations" as well as any other excavation requirements established by this municipality; and (3) that he is aware of and has, with regard to the proposed trench excavation on private property or proposed excavation of a city or town public way that forms the basis of the permit application, complied with the requirements of sections 40-40D of chapter 82A.

THE PERMIT SHALL BE POSTED IN PLAIN VIEW ON THE SITE OF THE TRENCH.

Summary of Excavation and Trench Safety Regulation (520 CMR 14.00 et seq.)

This summary was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety pursuant to G.L.c.82A and does not include all requirements of the 520 CMR 14.00. To view the full regulation and G.L.c.82A, go to [www/mass.gov/dps](http://www.mass.gov/dps)

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 82, § 1, the Department of Public Safety, jointly with the Division of Occupational Safety, drafted regulations relative to trench safety. The regulation is codified in section 14.00 of title 520 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations. The regulation requires all excavators to obtain a permit prior to the excavation of a trench made for a construction-related purpose on public or private land or rights-of-way. All municipalities must establish a local permitting authority for the purpose of issuing permits for trenches within their municipality. Trenches on land owned or controlled by a public (state) agency requires a permit to be issued by that public agency unless otherwise designated.

In addition to the permitting requirements mandated by statute, the trench safety regulations require that all excavators, whether public or private, take specific precautions to protect the general public and prevent unauthorized access to unattended trenches. Accordingly, unattended trenches must be covered, barricaded or backfilled. Covers must be road plates at least 3/4" thick or equivalent; barricades must be fences at least 6' high with no openings greater than 4" between vertical supports or openings greater than 4" may be protected by solid guards or suitable materials, including plywood or wood planks; backfilling must be sufficient to eliminate the trench. Alternatively, excavators may choose to attend trenches at all times, for instance by hiring a police detail, security guard or other attendant who will be present during times when the trench will be unattended by the excavator.

The regulations further provide that local permitting authorities, the Department of Public Safety, or the Division of Occupational Safety may order an immediate shutdown of a trench in the event of a death or serious injury; the failure to obtain a permit; or the failure to implement or effectively use adequate protections for the general public. The trench shall remain shutdown until re-inspected and authorized to re-open provided, however, the excavators shall have the right to appeal an immediate shutdown. Re-inspection must occur within two (2) business days of written notifications by the excavator to the Permitting Authority that it has complied with all repairs/corrections ordered. Permitting authorities are further authorized to suspend or revoke a permit following a hearing. Excavators may also be subject to

administrative fines issued by the Department of Public Safety for identified violations.



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Public Safety

&

Division of Occupational Safety

EXCAVATION AND TRENCH ADVISORY



Dear Permitting Authority,

The Excavation and Trench Safety regulations promulgated in [520 CMR 14.00](#) went into effect on March 1, 2009. The Department of Public Safety ("DPS") and Division of Occupational Safety ("DOS") have received numerous questions regarding the definitions of "Excavator," "Permit Holder," "Applicant" and operator and this notification is intended to answer some frequently asked questions.



Excavator; Permit Holder; Applicant; Operator

The term "[excavator](#)" is defined in the Excavation and Trench Safety statute, [M.G.L. c. 82A, § 4](#) as "any entity including, but not limited to, a person, partnership, joint venture, trust, corporation, association, public utility, company or state or local government body which performs excavation operations." See also [M.G.L. c. 82, § 40](#).

A "[permit holder](#)" is defined as "the excavator who is responsible for acquiring a permit from the Permitting Authority." See [522 CMR 14.02](#).

Therefore, the excavator is responsible for securing the permit and is the individual or entity who is the permit holder and the applicant. While the excavator/permit holder/applicant may be the same person or entity as the operator, there is no requirement that this be so. In fact, in the vast majority of cases, the excavator/permit holder/applicant and the operator will not be the same. Further, there is no requirement that the excavator hold a hoisting license, provided that all of the operators who are operating hoisting equipment on the project are properly licensed. See [M.G.L. c. 82A, § 3\(4\)](#); [M.G.L. c. 146, § 65](#) and [520 CMR 6.00](#).

By way of illustration, an individual digging a trench in his or her backyard may be the person making the application for the permit and therefore be the excavator/permit holder/applicant. This individual may also be the operator. Please note, however that a homeowner digging a trench on his or her property must possess a valid DPS issued hoisting license except where the trench is created with hand tools or other equipment exempt from the hoisting license requirements pursuant to [M.G.L. c. 146, § 65](#) and [520 CMR 6.00](#). See also [M.G.L. c. 82A, § 3\(4\)](#).

Conversely, a public utility company which is performing excavations in a city or town public way would most likely be the excavator/permit holder/applicant who would then hire operators (who hold valid DPS issued hoisting licenses) to dig the actual trenches.

There has also been confusion over whose responsibility it is to provide the insurance required under [Chapter 82A, § 2](#). Pursuant to section 2, it is the excavator/permit holder/applicant, which may or may not be the operator, who is required to provide a certificate of insurance with general liability coverage of \$100,000 per person and \$300,000 per claim or provide evidence of self-insurance in equal amounts. See [M.G.L. c. 82A, § 2](#).

Finally, pursuant to [section 1 of G.L. c. 82A](#), the excavator/permit holder/applicant is responsible for ensuring that the trench is not left unattended without first implementing the protections for the general public required in [520 CMR 14.04](#). For more complete information on all of the responsibilities of the excavator/permit holder/applicant please review the entire Regulation at [520 CMR 14.00](#).

Please visit the DPS website at www.mass.gov/dps or the DOS website at www.mass.gov/dos for additional information.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Szatynia

Commissioner
Department of Public Safety

Laura M. Maslin

Commissioner
Division of Occupational Safety

Summary of 1926 CFR Subpart P -OSHA Excavation Standard

This is a worker protection standard, and is designed to protect employees who are working inside a trench. This summary was prepared by the Massachusetts Division of Occupational Safety and not OSHA for informational purposes only and does not constitute an official interpretation by OSHA of their regulations, and may not include all aspects of the standard.

For further information or a full copy of the standard go to www.osha.gov.

- **Trench Definition per the OSHA standard:**
 - An excavation made below the surface of the ground, narrow in relation to its length.
 - In general, the depth is greater than the width, but the width of the trench is not greater than fifteen feet.
- **Protective Systems** to prevent soil wall collapse are always required in trenches deeper than 5', and are also required in trenches less than 5' deep when the competent person determines that a hazard exists. Protection options include:
 - Shoring. Shoring must be used in accordance with the OSHA Excavation standard appendices, the equipment manufacturer's tabulated data, or designed by a registered professional engineer.
 - Shielding (Trench Boxes). Trench boxes must be used in accordance with the equipment manufacturer's tabulated data, or a registered professional engineer.
 - Sloping or Benching. In Type C soils (what is most typically encountered) the excavation must extend horizontally 1 ½ feet for every foot of trench depth on both sides, 1 foot for Type B soils, and ¾ foot for Type A soils.
 - A registered professional engineer must design protective systems for all excavations greater than 20' in depth.
- **Ladders** must be used in trenches deeper than 4'.
 - Ladders must be inside the trench with workers at all times, and located within 25' of unobstructed lateral travel for every worker in the trench.
 - Ladders must extend 3' above the top of the trench so workers can safely get onto and off of the ladder.
- **Inspections** of every trench worksite are required:
 - Prior to the start of each shift, and again when there is a change in conditions such as a rainstorm.
 - Inspections must be conducted by the competent person (see below).
- **Competent Person(s) is:**
 - Capable (i.e., trained and knowledgeable) in identifying existing and predictable hazards in the trench, and other working conditions which may pose a hazard to workers, and
 - Authorized by management to take necessary corrective action to eliminate the hazards. Employees must be removed from hazardous areas until the hazard has been corrected.
- **Underground Utilities** must be:
 - Identified prior to opening the excavation (e.g., contact Digsafe).
 - Located by safe and acceptable means while excavating.
 - Protected, supported, or removed once exposed.
- **Spoils** must be kept back a minimum of 2' from the edge of the trench.
- **Surface Encumbrances** creating a hazard must be removed or supported to safeguard employees. Keep heavy equipment and heavy material as far back from the edge of the trench as possible.
- **Stability of Adjacent Structures:**
 - Where the stability of adjacent structures is endangered by creation of the trench, they must be underpinned, braced, or otherwise supported.
 - Sidewalks, pavements, etc. shall not be undermined unless a support system or other method of protection is provided.
- **Protection from water accumulation hazards:**
 - It is not allowable for employees to work in trenches with accumulated water. If water control such as pumping is used to prevent water accumulation, this must be monitored by the competent person.

- If the trench interrupts natural drainage of surface water, ditches, dikes or other means must be used to prevent this water from entering the excavation.
- **Additional Requirements:**
 - For mobile equipment operated near the edge of the trench, a warning system such as barricades or stop logs must be used.
 - Employees are not permitted to work underneath loads. Operators may not remain in vehicles being loaded unless vehicles are equipped with adequate protection as per 1926.601(b)(6).
 - Employees must wear high-visibility clothing in traffic work zones.
 - Air monitoring must be conducted in trenches deeper than 4' if the potential for a hazardous atmosphere exists. If a hazardous atmosphere is found to exist (e.g., O₂ <19.5% or >23.5%, 20% LEL, specific chemical hazard), adequate protections shall be taken such as ventilation of the space.
 - Walkways are required where employees must cross over the trench. Walkways with guardrails must be provided for crossing over trenches > 6' deep.
 - Employees must be protected from loose rock or soil through protections such as scaling or protective barricades.