

# Alleged Cave-in Hazard Leads to Repeat and Serious Violations

OSHA cited a company after an inspection found employees installing a water line in an unprotected trench more than five feet deep. OSHA says the cave-in hazard was made worse by the piling of excavated material at the trench edge. It could have undermined the trench's walls and fallen onto workers. There was also no ladder or other safe means of exiting the trench and no head protection was used by employees in the trench. The same company was cited in March 2007 for similar hazards at another worksite. Four repeat citations carrying \$22,200 in proposed fines were issued, along with three serious citations alleging that water was allowed to accumulate at the bottom of a trench, failure to have a competent person inspect a trench for hazards, and use of a damaged sling. Proposed penalties for the serious violations total \$12,000.

*[Bortolotti Construction Inc., Marston Mills, MA. Release Number 07-1805-BOS/BOS 2007-358, Nov. 26, 2007]*