

15/01/2020

Worker falls in trench

21 October 2019

Incident overview

While putting pickets and bunting around an excavation on a construction site in Marsden Park, a 30-year-old labourer fell 3 metres into the trench, suffering fractures to his leg.



Construction site in Marsden Park

The investigation

- SafeWork NSW inspectors responded to the incident.
- SafeWork NSW commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.



Incident Information Release

SAFEWORK NSW

15/01/2020

Safety information

Businesses are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety in accordance with the provisions of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#).

Consider 'reasonably practicable' control measures to manage the risks of falling into an excavation at a workplace, including:

- developing a plan – in consultation with your workers and before work begins – on managing the risks of falls in and around excavations
- considering barrier fencing to further minimise accidental encroachment – perimeter barriers should be effective
- considering a suitable location for inspection, and access and egress for emergency situations
- consulting with an engineer to determine distances where shoring, benching and battering should be used – and monitor distances, particularly after rain
- using a landing platform – or scaffold towers for big excavations – to 'in-fill'
- preparing a safe work method statement when there is a risk of falling more than two metres – and ensure workers are inducted and supervised in its implementation
- backfilling or covering the excavation.

Further information

- [Code of practice for excavation work](#)
- [Code of practice for managing the risk of falls at workplaces](#)
- [SafeWork NSW falls from heights action plan](#)