

## TOOLBOX TALK #26

### **CONSTRUCTION WORKER DIES IN TRENCH COLLAPSE**

A 19-year-old construction worker, a foreman and three other laborers were laying sewer pipe in a trench on the day of the incident. The trench measured a depth of 12'-2" and covered an area of 5 feet by 48 feet. A trench box measuring 8 feet deep and covering an area of 2 feet by 16 feet had been placed into the trench. The trench box walls were 4'-2" too short.

A section of spoil pile and concrete gave way, burying the 19-year-old and trapping another laborer from the waist down. The second laborer was extracted after four and a half hours. The victim required two additional hours of extraction and was pronounced dead at the scene.

#### **To help prevent similar occurrences:**

- Trench boxes should have a wall height greater than or equal to the wall height of the surrounding trench
- A pre-job hazard analysis should be performed before work begins
- Employers should ensure a competent person is on the job before starting work and that he or she receives regular refresher training to maintain competent person status.
- Ensure all employees receive proper trench safety training.

