

Contractors must give the Department 24- to 48-hour notice before beginning any type of earthwork. The Department may issue a Stop Work Order and a violation for Failure to Notify to the contractor and/or property owner for excavations performed without notice.

To notify, call (212) 227 – 4416.

Permits

Permits are required for most types of earthwork, such as underpinning. The work must meet the approved plans.

General Safety for Excavations + Trenches

Proper engineering and oversight is necessary at an excavation or trench to protect workers, passersby and neighboring properties.

Proper precautions may include having:

- Sheeting, shoring and bracing;
- Sloping / 45-degree angle of repose;
- Guardrails;
- Solid enclosures; and
- Egress, such as ladders or ramps.

Proper precautions may also include:

- Regularly checking walls for cracks, bulges and spalling;
- Inspecting shoring for signs of distress;
- Examining slopes after a rainstorm;
- Only working where the proper protections are in place;
- Not working when there is running or standing water;
- Never storing soil, material or equipment near the edge;
- Not driving or parking vehicles near the edge.

Audits

The Department randomly audits sites for: excavation depth; pumping; pile driving; sheeting, shoring and bracing; angle of repose; form bracing; underpinning; ground water; movement monitoring; pre-construction surveys; and Special Inspections.

FDNY

The Fire Department of New York regulates all blasting operations and requires permits. Visit nyc.gov/fdny for more information.

Utilities

Call 811 before you begin digging to notify the utility company.

Cancellations

Contractors must notify the Department of Buildings of a cancellation within 24 hours of the scheduled earthwork and before the work was set to begin.