

V. OTHER ANALYSES

SOIL ANALYSIS IN SUPPORT OF THE EXCAVATION STANDARD

Soil analyses at the SLTC is performed to support CSHOs' inspection and compliance responsibilities with respect to trenching and excavation standards such as [29 CFR 1926 Subpart P](#). It also supports citations and legal proceedings. For further information refer to OSHA's [Trenching and Excavation Topic Page](#).

A representative soil sample from a trench or excavation is sent to the SLTC for analysis. Soil should be placed in a heavy-duty, tear-resistant plastic bag, secured, and sealed with tape to be airtight. Place the first plastic bag in a second heavy-duty plastic bag for additional protection. Sample size can vary from one pint for very fine-grained samples to two quarts for coarse gravel. A typical sample should be approximately one quart and weigh about three pounds. Do not place any sampling documentation in the bag with the soil.

This soil sample is examined and tested according to [OSHA Method ID-194](#). This fully validated method was developed specifically for the OSHA Excavation standard ([29 CFR 1926 Subpart P](#)). The required tests take a minimum of four days before results can be provided. The SLTC sample results specify the soil type as well as the textural and structural classification. The soil classification will be Type A, Type B, or Type C, corresponding to the descriptions listed in the Excavation standard ([29 CFR 1926 Subpart P, Appendix A](#)). When requested, moisture content can also be provided.

Any questions arising from this analysis can be answered by trained soil experts at the SLTC. This analysis helps CSHOs as well as the inspected establishment personnel understand how to properly protect workers from cave-ins and how to properly evaluate protection measures used to comply with existing regulations.