

Foundation Construction Fatality File



A 32-year-old Hispanic construction laborer died after being crushed under a concrete patio foundation. The victim was performing an excavation under a concrete patio foundation when it collapsed on him. The concrete patio foundation that fell on the victim was not part of the building foundation and was not supported to prevent it from falling. There was no competent person at the work site to evaluate the excavation being done by the victim and his co-worker. The workers had not received formal training on trenching and excavation. The CA/FACE investigator determined that, in order to prevent future incidents, employers with construction laborers who work in trenches or excavations should ensure that:

- Protective systems are in place before employees place themselves under any object that has been undermined as part of an excavation.
- A competent person is at the work site to identify existing or potential hazards and to take immediate corrective action if such hazards are identified.
- Construction laborers have a thorough understanding of the risk of collapse of unsupported structures before entering an excavation.

CAUSE OF DEATH

The cause of death according to the death certificate was mechanical asphyxia caused by compression of the torso from a large concrete block.