# Locating Underground Utilities Before You Dig Fatality File



## Man dies after being trapped under 16 tons of dirt

A 29-year-old man who has been buried under 16 to 20 tons of dirt since about 10:30 a.m. at a construction site near 53rd North and Webb has died, Bel Aire Police Chief Darrell Atteberry confirmed at around 3:30 p.m.

Crews reached the man after about 5 hours of digging and removed him from the trench at 4:15 p.m. He has not been identified.

The man’s family has been on the scene for several hours.

“They’re grieving at this point,” the chief said at 2 p.m.

The site is close to a FedEx Ground Sort Facility and Next Level Hoops Academy.

Atteberry said the man was working at the bottom of a trench at about 10:30 a.m. when it caved in. Whether or not crews were using a trench box is unknown. Atteberry referred questions about the specifics of what happened to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

OSHA has been on scene talking to other people who were at the dig site, Atteberry said. About four men were working this morning when the collapse happened.

About 35 people worked at the site trying to get him out of the trench, including crews from the Sedgwick County and Wichita fire departments.

The man was excavating a hole to bury a pipe.

He works for Wilks Underground Utilities and was the only person in the trench at the time of the collapse, Atteberry said.

Wilks Underground is an excavation company based in Wichita. The crews were not part of the city of Bel Aire, Atteberry said.