Lesson Review: Excavations

The following hazards exist in excavations:

- Cave-ins
- Asphyxiation due to lack of oxygen
- Inhalation of toxic materials
- Fire
- Moving machinery near the edge of the excavation that can cause a collapse
- Improper protective systems
- Exposure to vehicular traffic
- Accidental severing of underground utility lines

Note the following key points from this lesson:

- Before excavation work can begin, it is necessary to determine the location of utilities underground, such as:
  - Gas lines
  - Electric lines
- When exposed to public vehicular traffic, you must wear high visibility and reflective vests or other suitable garments.
- Employees must not work under equipment that will be moving loads or digging equipment.
- Excavation may contain employee exposure to potentially hazardous atmospheres.
- Do not work in excavations where water is present or accumulating unless precautions are taken.

**Remember:** To help ensure safety, daily inspections of excavations, adjacent areas and protective systems must be made by a competent person.