



U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety & Health Administration

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OSHA News Release

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OSHA Regional News Release

U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs

Region 4

Region 4 News Release

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OSHA Cites Gainesville, Ga., Construction Company Following Investigation of Trench Collapse *Proposed Penalties Total Over \$84,000*

ATLANTA -- The U.S. Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited J. B. Stevens Construction Company Inc. and proposed penalties totaling \$84,700 for exposing workers to willful and serious trench safety hazards at a Cumming, Ga., job site.

OSHA began an investigation following the rescue of an employee trapped in a collapsed trench Nov. 30, 2004.

"By failing to follow safe trenching procedures, this employer put the lives of employees and rescue workers at risk," said Gei Thae Breezley, OSHA's Atlanta-East area director. "Hurrying to finish a job while ignoring safety rules too often ends in workers being injured and killed. In this incident, the worker was trapped for over eight hours."

OSHA issued one citation for an alleged willful violation for failing to properly shore, slope or use a trench box in a 14-foot-deep trench. The citation carries the maximum proposed penalty of \$70,000.

The company also received three serious citations, with total proposed penalties of \$14,700, for failing to provide ladders for safe entry to and exit from the trench; furnish personal protection equipment such as hard hats; and train employees to recognize and avoid unsafe conditions, such as water accumulation and inadequate protective systems at the job site.

The company has 15 working days from receipt of the citations to contest the citations and proposed penalties before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. The inspection was conducted by OSHA's Atlanta-East area office located at LaVista Perimeter Office Park, Bldg. 7, Suite 110, Tucker, Ga.; phone: (770) 493-6644.

Employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure the safety and health of America's workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

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