

**North Carolina Department of Labor
Occupational Safety and Health Division**

Raleigh, North Carolina

Field Information System

Standards Notice 61A

Subject: Residential Construction - Foundation or Basement Excavations

A. **Standard.**

29 CFR 1926.652 – Excavations; Requirements for Protective Systems.

B. **Scope.**

This policy applies to all such house foundation/basement excavations including those which become trenches by definition when formwork, foundations, or walls are constructed. This policy does not apply to utility excavations (trenches) where 29 CFR 1926.652 remains applicable

C. **Interpretation.**

29 CFR 1926.652 shall not be applied to house foundation/basement excavations when all the following conditions are present:

- The house foundation/basement excavation is less than seven and one-half feet in depth or is benched for at least two (2) feet horizontally for every five (5) feet or less of vertical height;
- The minimum horizontal width (excavation face to formwork/wall) at the bottom of the excavation is as wide as practicable but not less than two (2) feet;
- There is no water, surface tension cracks, nor other environmental conditions present that reduce the stability of the excavation;
- There is no heavy equipment operating in the vicinity that causes vibration to the excavation while employees are in the excavation;
- All soil, equipment, and material surcharge loads are no closer in distance to the top edge of the excavation than the excavation is deep; however, when front end loaders are used to dig the excavations, the soil surcharge load shall be placed as far back from the edge of the excavation as possible, but never closer than two (2) feet;
- Work crews in the excavation are the minimum number needed to perform the work; and
- The work has been planned and is carried out in a manner to minimize the time employees are in the excavation.

SN 61A cont'd.

D. **Effective Date.**

SN 61 is canceled. This SN is effective on the date of signature. It will remain in effect until revised or canceled by the Director.

Signed on Original
Kevin O'Barr
Safety Standards Officer

Signed on Original
Allen McNeely
Director

8/09/05
Date of Signature