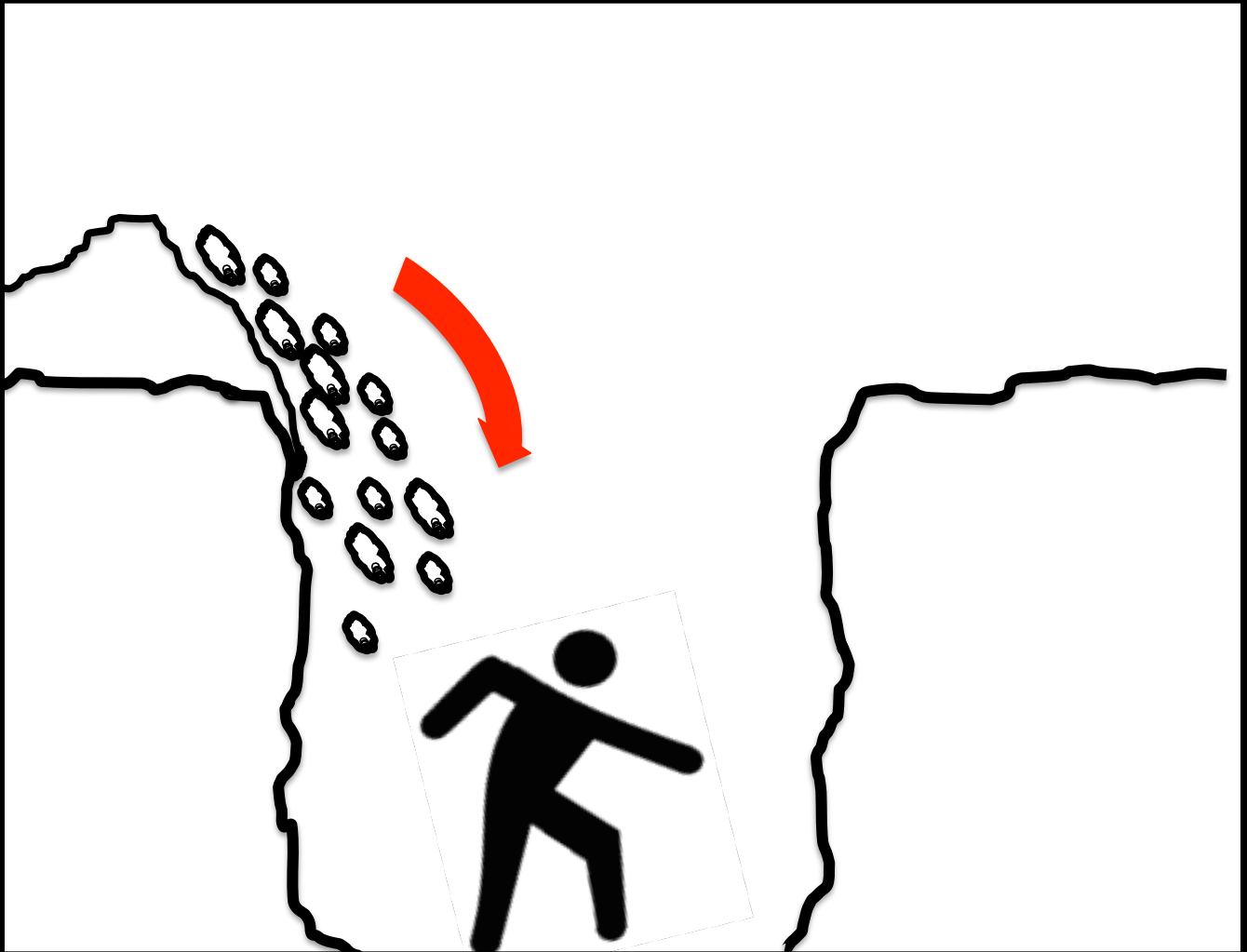


FATAL HAZARD

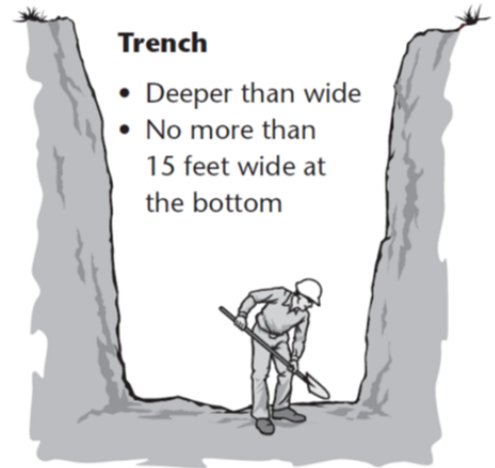


- Do not enter a trench until a competent person(s) approves entry
- Never enter a trench that does not have protection against cave-ins
- Follow safe procedures for entering and exiting a trench

Trench collapse kills construction worker

INSTRUCTIONS: Hold the guide with this side facing you and the other side facing your crew. Then read the story.

Our safety talk today is about a 47-year-old construction worker who was killed when a trench collapsed. The worker entered an unshored trench nearly 9 feet deep and 9 feet wide to retrieve an asphalt chunk that had fallen inside. He did not tell anyone his intention before making his way from the beginning of the trench through a 5-foot high culvert section already laid in the trench. As he stepped out of the culvert to retrieve the asphalt chunk, the dirt walls above him collapsed. Coworkers called for emergency help and dug out the victim, who died en route to the hospital.



[OR-OSHA publication 440-2174](#)

So here are some ways we can prevent something like this from happening where we work.

- Do not enter a trench until a Competent Person approves entry. Always communicate with a Competent Person on site before entering a trench.
- Never enter a trench or excavation that's five feet deep or more without protection from cave-ins. Cave-ins pose the greatest danger for a fatality. The basic methods to prevent cave-ins are sloping, benching, shoring and shielding. Remember that one cubic yard of soil can weight as much as a car.
- Follow safe procedures for entering and exiting a trench. An excavation with a depth of four feet or more must have a stairway, ladder, or ramp within 25 feet of employees

ASK: "Does anyone have more ideas or comments to share?"
Pause for discussion. Then see if there are ways to take action.

END WITH ACTION PLAN (ideas for what to ask or say).

- What do you all do to make sure people are not entering a hazardous environment such as an unsafe trench?
- Do we have a task today that requires an inspection by a Competent Person?
- Discuss a similar situation at your current site.
- Express your commitment to training people on hazardous environments that can be expected within scope of work.
- Commit to follow-up at the next safety talk.