

Two Septic Installers Killed in Long Island Trench Collapse

Even in the best of circumstances, excavation is dangerous work, which is why it's best left to you — the professionals. But we can't emphasize enough the importance of persistently committing to proper trench safety practices when you and your crew are working on excavation projects.

A recent and unfortunate story out of Long Island, New York, serves as a reminder to all of us in the industry about what's at stake when you're on a job site, and why safety should be everyone's No. 1 concern.

On Jan. 28, two workers were killed in a trench collapse during a septic system installation for a large new home under construction in Upper Brookville. Authorities say the two men, ages 45 and 57, were 30 feet underground in an excavation hole when one of the dirt walls gave way.

The workers were covered in 5 to 7 feet of dirt, and first responders tried to rescue the men by digging with shovels. They were able to extract one of the men at that time, but he was pronounced dead at the scene. The body of the second worker was recovered about 24 hours later due to the collapse of a second wall of dirt during rescue efforts, which were postponed due to darkness, according to [WABC News](#) and [NBC New York](#).

"They put their lives at risk, they went down into this hole, they were able to rescue one male, but unfortunately he was pronounced (dead) a short time later," Nassau County Police Lieutenant Richard LeBrun tells NBC New York. "Once those other walls started to give away, it was just too dangerous for anyone else to be in that area."

NBC New York also posted aerial images on Twitter showing the large extent of the emergency response to the trench collapse:

BREAKING: Trench rescue underway in Upper Brookville on LI ... massive response to reach 2 workers trapped at a work site on Wolver Hollow Road [#nbc4ny pic.twitter.com/VOZZJLTPJj](#) — Steven Bognar (@Bogs4NY) [January 28, 2020](#)

Trench safety resources

Make trench safety a pillar of your company's identity. There are always ways to improve your company's safety practices, but also remember to take the time to brush up on the fundamentals too.

For free on its website, OSHA has a Trenching and Excavation Safety manual [for anyone to download](#). In this manual, OSHA goes over the fundamentals of excavation and trench safety, including an analysis of the various classifications of soil.

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January 30, 2020