



**BILLING CODE 4510-26-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

**[Docket No. OSHA-2011-0057]**

**Excavations (Design of Cave-in Protection Systems); Extension of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Approval of Information Collection (Paperwork) Requirements**

**AGENCY:** Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Labor.

**ACTION:** Request for public comments.

**SUMMARY:** OSHA solicits public comments concerning its proposal to extend OMB approval of the information collection requirements contained in the Standard on Excavations (Design of Cave-in Protection Systems).

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted (postmarked, sent, or received) by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:**

*Electronically:* You may submit comments and attachments electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, which is the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Follow the instructions online for submitting comments.

*Facsimile:* If your comments, including attachments, are not longer than 10 pages, you may fax them to the OSHA Docket Office at (202) 693-1648.

*Mail, hand delivery, express mail, messenger, or courier service:* When using this method, you must submit a copy of your comments and attachments to the OSHA Docket Office, OSHA Docket No. OSHA-2011-0057, U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Room N-3653, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210. Deliveries (hand, express mail, messenger, and courier service) are accepted during the Docket Office's normal business hours, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., e.t.

*Instructions:* All submissions must include the Agency name and the OSHA docket number (OSHA-2011-0057) for the Information Collection Request (ICR). All comments, including any personal information you provide, are placed in the public docket without change, and may be made available online at <http://www.regulations.gov>. For further information on submitting comments, see the "Public Participation" heading in the section of this notice titled "SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION."

*Docket:* To read or download comments or other material in the docket, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> or the OSHA Docket Office at the address above. All documents in the docket (including this *Federal Register* notice) are listed in the <http://www.regulations.gov> index; however, some information (e.g., copyrighted material) is not publicly available to read or download through the web site. All submissions, including copyrighted material, are available for inspection and copying at the OSHA Docket Office. You may also contact Theda Kenney at the phone number below to obtain a copy of the ICR.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Charles McCormick or Theda Kenney, Directorate of Standards and Guidance, OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor, (202) 693-2222.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Background**

The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent (i.e., employer) burden, conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on proposed and continuing information collection requirements in accord with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA-95) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). This program ensures that information is in the desired format, reporting burden (time and costs) is minimal, collection instruments are clearly understood, and OSHA's estimate of the information collection burden is accurate. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) (29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.) authorizes information collection by employers as necessary or appropriate for enforcement of the Act or for developing information regarding the causes and prevention of occupational injuries, illnesses, and accidents (29 U.S.C. 657). The OSH Act also requires that OSHA obtain such information with minimum burden upon employers, especially those operating small businesses, and to reduce to the maximum extent feasible unnecessary duplication of efforts in obtaining information (29 U.S.C. 657).

Paragraphs (b) and (c) of §1926.652 (“Requirements for Protective Systems;” the “Standard”) contain paperwork requirements that impose burden hours or costs on

employers. These paragraphs require employers to use protective systems to prevent cave-ins during excavation work; these systems include sloping the side of the trench, benching the soil away from the excavation, or using a support system or shield (such as a trench box). The Standard specifies allowable configurations and slopes for excavations, and provides appendices to assist employers in designing protective systems. However, paragraphs (b)(3) and (b)(4) of the Standard permit employers to design sloping or benching systems based on tabulated data (Option 3), or to use a design approved by a registered professional engineer (Option 4).

Under Option 3, employers must provide the tabulated data in a written form that also identifies the registered professional engineer who approved the data and the parameters used to select the sloping or benching system drawn from the data, as well as the limitations of the data (including the magnitude and configuration of slopes determined to be safe). The document must also provide any explanatory information necessary to select the correct benching system based on the data. Option 2 requires employers to develop a written design approved by a registered professional engineer. The design information must include the magnitude and configuration of the slopes determined to be safe, and the identity of the registered professional engineer who approved the design.

Paragraph (c)(2)(iii) allows employers to use manufacturer's tabulated data or to deviate from the data provided. The manufacturer's specification, recommendations, and limitations as well as the manufacturer's approval to deviate from these items shall be in writing. Paragraphs (c)(3) and (c)(4) allow employers to design support systems, shield systems, and other protective systems based on tabulated data provided by a system

manufacturer (Option 3) or obtained from other sources including a registered professional engineer and approved by a registered professional engineer (Option 4).

Each of these provisions requires employers to maintain a copy of the documents described in these options at the jobsite during construction. After construction is completed, employers may store the documents off-site provided they make them available to an OSHA compliance officer on request. These documents provide both the employer and the compliance officer with information needed to determine if the selection and design of a protective system are appropriate to the excavation work, thereby assuring workers maximum protection against cave-ins.

## **II. Special Issues for Comment**

OSHA has a particular interest in comments on the following issues:

- Whether the proposed information collection requirements are necessary for the proper performance of the Agency's functions, including whether the information is useful;
- The accuracy of OSHA's estimate of the burden (time and costs) of the information collection requirements, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

- The quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden on employers who must comply; for example, by using automated or other technological information collection and transmission techniques.

### **III. Proposed Actions**

The Agency is requesting that OMB extend its approval of the information collection requirements contained in the Standard on Excavations (Design of Cave-in Protection Systems). An increase in the number of construction from 761,873 to 931,009 projects/sites has resulted in an adjustment increase in burden hours from 14,266 to 17,262 - a total increase of 2,996 burden hours. OSHA increased the number of apartment and non-residential construction sites that would use outside contractor engineering services for the required protective system design approval from 2,038 to 2,466. There was an increase in hourly wage for a civil engineer from \$53.17 to \$63.16, which increased the overall cost from \$216,721 to \$311,505, a difference of \$94,784.

The Agency will summarize any comments submitted in response to this notice and will include this summary in the request to OMB to extend the approval of the information collection requirements contained in the Standard.

*Type of Review:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

*Title:* Excavations (Design of Cave-in Protection Systems) (29 CFR part 1926, subpart P).

*OMB Control Number:* 1218-0137.

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profits.

*Number of Respondents:* 8,382.

*Number of Responses:* 17,262.

*Frequency of Responses:* On occasion.

*Average Time per Response:* Various.

*Estimated Total Burden Hours:* 17,262 hours.

*Estimated Cost (Operation and Maintenance):* \$0.

#### **IV. Public Participation – Submission of Comments on this Notice and Internet Access to Comments and Submissions**

You may submit comments in response to this document as follows: (1) electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, which is the Federal eRulemaking Portal; (2) by facsimile (fax); or (3) by hard copy. All comments, attachments, and other material must identify the Agency name and the OSHA docket number (Docket No. OSHA-2011-0057) for the ICR. You may supplement electronic submissions by uploading document files electronically. If you wish to mail additional materials in reference to an electronic or facsimile submission, you must submit them to the OSHA

Docket Office (see the section of this notice titled “ADDRESSES”). The additional materials must clearly identify your electronic comments by your name, date, and the docket number so the Agency can attach them to your comments.

Because of security procedures, the use of regular mail may cause a significant delay in the receipt of comments. For information about security procedures concerning the delivery of materials by hand, express delivery, messenger, or courier service, please contact the OSHA Docket Office at (202) 693-2350, TTY (877) 889-5627.

Comments and submissions are posted without change at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Therefore, OSHA cautions commenters about submitting personal information such as social security numbers and dates of birth. Although all submissions are listed in the <http://www.regulations.gov> index, some information (e.g., copyrighted material) is not publicly available to read or download through this Web site. All submissions, including copyrighted material, are available for inspection and copying at the OSHA Docket Office. Information on using the <http://www.regulations.gov> Web site to submit comments and access the docket is available at the Web site’s “User Tips”

link. Contact the OSHA Docket Office for information about materials not available through the Web site and for assistance in using the Internet to locate docket submissions.

## **V. Authority and Signature**

Loren Sweatt, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, directed the preparation of this notice. The authority for this notice is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3506 et seq.) and Secretary of Labor's Order No. 1-2012 (77 FR 3912).

Signed at Washington, DC, on December 5, 2017.

**Loren Sweatt,**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health.*

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