

OSHA Cites Alabama Construction Firm for Trench Collapse Hazards

On behalf of Johnston, Moore & Thompson

- December 13, 2010

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited Tuscaloosa-based J&P Construction, doing business as Jamison Construction, with one willful and two serious workplace safety violations because it exposed its workers to the risk of a serious [construction accident](#) at a job site in Destin, Florida.

The job involved installing storm drains along Florida State Highway 98. During the trenching process, the company failed to provide adequate cave-in protection, such as trench boxes. OSHA safety standards require all excavations or trenches 5 feet deep or deeper to have adequate safeguards against collapse. The trenches for the Highway 98 job were 8 feet deep.

"This employer knew there were trench boxes available at a nearby worksite, but chose not to use them and put the lives of its workers at risk," said OSHA's Jacksonville area director James Borders. "Disregarding the safety of workers is unacceptable and OSHA will not tolerate it."

OSHA cited that failure as a willful safety violation, which means that the company's actions were done intentionally or with clear indifference to their workers' safety and health. The proposed penalty for that violation is \$38,500.

OSHA: Lack of Training, Egress Put Construction Workers at Substantial Risk

The company also allowed construction workers to work in 8-foot-deep trenches without the proper training or experience to recognize hazard that could lead to trench collapse, according to OSHA. Further, they failed to provide a ladder or other means of egress that could have saved the workers in the event of a trench collapse.

For those actions, OSHA cited Jamison with two serious safety violations, which means that OSHA found that there was imminent danger to workers if the [structure collapsed](#), and that the employer knew or should have known about the risks. OSHA's proposed penalty for the two serious safety citations is \$7,000.

Jamison has 15 business days from the date they received the citations to respond. They can choose to comply, contest the findings in an informal meeting with OSHA, or file a contest with the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

Source: OSHA Region 4 News Release, "[US Labor Department's OSHA cites Alabama-based Jamison Construction for cave-in hazards at Florida worksite](#)," December 7, 2010