



## **Work Safety Alert** **Fall into a Subsided Hole and Trapped to Death**

- 1. Date of Accident :** July 2020
- 2. Place of Accident :** A foundation site
- 3. Summary :**

The ground on which a piling equipment sat suddenly subsided, causing a site personnel to fall together with the equipment into the subsided ground. As a result, the site personnel was trapped to death by the equipment.

### **4. Work Safety Alert for Contractors/ Employers :**

To effectively control and prevent hazards arising from ground subsidence on a foundation site, the contractors/ employers responsible for the piling work should ensure the workplace and the piling equipment are safe through, but not limited to, the following:

- appointing a competent engineer with adequate and relevant qualifications, competence and experience to conduct a risk assessment to identify all potential hazards associated with the work, taking into account the nature of work, the work environment, the sitting of the piling equipment and the ground conditions, particularly the geotechnical hazards;
- carrying out a thorough site investigation on the ground conditions to ensure that every piling equipment will be positioned in areas having sufficient load bearing capacity;
- ensuring every piling equipment is placed and operated on firm ground with sufficient load bearing capacity to withstand the maximum in-service loading of the equipment;



- ensuring the loading of every piling equipment is distributed over a sufficiently large area by using, for example, steel plates of adequate strength, suitable mats or suitable timber blocking to avoid the sinkage or collapse of the supporting surface of ground;
- where pile driving operation is to be conducted, providing adequate supervision to ensure the method of piling including the type of pile selected, layout of the piles and the arrangement of the piling equipment used, adherence to the agreed method statement;
- carrying out regular settlement survey in monitoring the soil settlement of the nearby piling equipment resulting from the pile driving operation;
- examining every part of the earthwork, including the sitting of the piling equipment, by a competent person on regular basis to ensure that there is no sinkage of the ground; and
- exercising adequate monitoring and supervision to ensure that the above safety measures are strictly followed.

## 5. Reference :

- [Safe Systems of Work](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Five Steps to Risk Assessment](#)<sup>1</sup>
- [Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training](#)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Click to view document



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Note: The material contained in the Alert is not exhaustive, and will be supplemented/adjusted where necessary if more relevant information comes to light.