



# TOOLBOX TALKS

Guides for discussing safety.



## Stop Work

**Talk Leader:** Ask the group the questions in bold.  
You may read/refer to the unbolded text to facilitate discussion and understanding.



### What is stop work authority?

Stop work authority is the right and obligation to stop work when an uncontrolled health, safety, and environment risk exists in the workplace.

### Provide an example of a stop work order.

Two Construction Inspectors are onsite to conduct soil compaction testing within an excavation. Worker A heads down into the 10-foot excavation to conduct the testing. Worker B realizes that there is no protective shoring for the excavation. He yells for Worker A to exit the excavation who reluctantly comes back out despite not completing the testing. Worker B discusses the lack of protective shoring and that they should call their supervisor as this has become a stop work order. The supervisor speaks to the General Contractor (GC) about the matter. An emergency meeting is held onsite and the GC agrees to install protective systems. The workers wait for the systems to be installed and then complete the work.

### How do we prevent issues that may arise from a stop work order?

Pre-planning is key to preventing the need for stop work orders. Work practices should be discussed and reviewed before the work begins. If a procedure or practice is confusing or unclear, talk to a supervisor. However, once the work begins, unexpected hazards may arise and workers are encouraged to initiate stop work orders. Also, respect others' use of stop work orders. Remember, the intent of the order is to protect against an unsafe condition. We all want to stay safe on the job site.