

CHECKLIST · FREE RESOURCE LIBRARY · DIRT WORK BID SCHOOL

Site Walk Checklist

Everything on a site that has a cost attached to it, grouped so you can walk it in one pass and come back with notes instead of an impression.

Who it is for. Anybody who has driven away from a site walk, sat in the truck, and realised he cannot remember whether there was a power pole in the way.

How to use it

This is a list, not a route. Walk the site in whatever order the ground allows, and tick items off as you find the answers. What matters is that you leave with every line answered rather than with a feeling.

Take photographs of anything you tick as a problem, and put the date in the photo. Six weeks later a photograph of the ditch line before you started is worth more than any argument you can make.

The order a contractor with twenty-five years in walks a site, and what he is looking for that a man two years in walks straight past, is module one of Dirt Work Bid School. It is still being filmed. This sheet is the list of what has a price on it, which is a different and more portable thing.

Access and staging

- ☐ Can a lowboy physically get in, turn around and get back out
- ☐ Weight limits, low bridges or posted roads on the haul route
- ☐ Overhead lines across the access and over the work area, and their height
- ☐ Where the machine sits overnight, and whether that is secure
- ☐ Where materials get stockpiled without being in the way of the next operation
- ☐ Where the trucks queue without blocking the road or the neighbours
- ☐ Gate widths, locked gates, and who holds the key
- ☐ Working hours the site or the municipality allows
- ☐ Whether you share the site with other trades, and who was there first

The ground

- ☐ What the surface is: topsoil depth, pavement, gravel, slab
- ☐ Visible rock, ledge, or rock outcrop anywhere on or near the site
- ☐ Whether there is a geotechnical report, and whether the borings are anywhere near where you are digging
- ☐ Fill that somebody else placed, and whether anybody can tell you what is in it
- ☐ Old foundations, slabs, septic tanks, buried debris, burn pits
- ☐ Soil type as you would classify it under OSHA Appendix A, and what that does to your slope
- ☐ Groundwater: the season, the last rain, and whether the hole you are digging is below the water table
- ☐ Where the spoil goes, and whether there is room for it two feet back from the edge

- ☐ Whether you are exporting, importing, or balancing

Water

- ☐ Which way the site drains now, and which way it will drain when you are finished
- ☐ Streams, ditches, wetlands, ponds and any blue line on the plan
- ☐ Whether the disturbance is one acre or more, which triggers a construction stormwater permit
- ☐ Existing erosion control and whether you inherit responsibility for it
- ☐ Where a silt fence or a check dam actually has to go, not where it is drawn
- ☐ Whether you will need to pump, where the discharge goes, and whether that discharge needs treating
- ☐ Culverts and inlets that you have to keep working while you dig
- ☐ What happens to this site in a heavy rain overnight

Utilities

- ☐ Every visible utility marker, pedestal, riser, meter, valve box, manhole and pole photographed
- ☐ Locate ticket requested with the correct notice, and the ticket number written down
- ☐ Marks on the ground checked against the plan, and every difference noted
- ☐ Private lines identified: yard lights, irrigation, propane, private water, septic, well lines. One call does not mark these
- ☐ Overhead clearance for the boom and the raised bed
- ☐ Who to call, and who pays, if something is not where it was marked
- ☐ Whether the utility needs to be supported, relocated or shut down, and whose job that is

Adjacent structures and what you have to protect

- ☐ Buildings, walls, footings or foundations close enough to the excavation to be at risk
- ☐ How deep you are going relative to the bottom of the nearest footing
- ☐ Trees to be protected, with a drip line and a written penalty if you damage them
- ☐ Fences, mailboxes, irrigation heads, landscaping, sprinkler lines
- ☐ Driveways and aprons that your tracks will destroy
- ☐ Existing pavement edges and whether you are responsible for the saw cut
- ☐ Whose property line you are actually working to, and whether it is staked

The plan set against the ground

- ☐ Every elevation on the plan spot checked against something real
- ☐ Existing grades that do not match the plan, written down with a photograph
- ☐ The benchmark or control point, located and confirmed to exist
- ☐ Quantities you can verify on site, verified
- ☐ Anything on the plan that is not on the ground, and anything on the ground that is not on the plan

- ☐ Sheets that contradict each other, and which one the specification says governs

People, permits and the paperwork

- ☐ Who is actually in charge of this site day to day, with a phone number
- ☐ Which permits exist, which are applied for, and which nobody has started
- ☐ Whether this is public work, and whether prevailing wage and certified payroll apply
- ☐ Inspection regime: who inspects, how much notice they need, how long they take
- ☐ Neighbours who will complain, and about what
- ☐ Whether the public is exposed to your traffic, which brings a traffic control plan with it

Before you leave

- ☐ Photographs of every existing defect you do not want blamed on you
- ☐ A photograph of every utility mark with a tape or a boot in the frame to show size
- ☐ A written note of the one thing on this site most likely to cost you money
- ☐ A written note of what you would need to know to be sure about it
- ☐ Anything you are going to exclude, written down while you are still standing on it

Where this comes from

Every code, standard and statute this sheet leans on. Check them.

29 CFR 1926.651, Specific excavation requirements

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-29/subtitle-B/chapter-XVII/part-1926/subpart-P/section-1926.651>
OSHA construction standards, Subpart P. Current text on the electronic Code of Federal Regulations.

29 CFR 1926 Subpart P, Appendix A, Soil Classification

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-29/subtitle-B/chapter-XVII/part-1926/subpart-P/appendix-Appendix%20A%20to%20Subpart%20P%20of%20Part%201926>
The classification test procedure that produces Stable Rock, Type A, Type B or Type C.

29 CFR 1926 Subpart P, Appendix B, Sloping and Benching

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-29/subtitle-B/chapter-XVII/part-1926/subpart-P/appendix-Appendix%20B%20to%20Subpart%20P%20of%20Part%201926>
Figure B-1, the maximum allowable slopes by soil type.

EPA 2022 NPDES Construction General Permit

<https://www.epa.gov/npdes/2022-construction-general-permit-cgp>
Federal stormwater permit for construction. Most states run their own version of it.

Call 811, the national call-before-you-dig service

<https://call811.com/>
Routes to the one call notification centre for your state.

Ladders into module 01, Read the Site Before You Price It.

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<https://dirtworkbusiness.com/library/site-walk-checklist>