

METHOD STATEMENT

This procedure should be read in conjunction with all relevant specifications and standards for Safety, Environment, Engineering, Construction and Reinstatement. The specifications below are those of Utility Support Solutions Limited, however, the specifications of the adopting authorities shall have precedence where they differ from those indicated

Method Statement Title	Backfilling Excavations and Removing Spoil		
Scope	To provide a safe and efficient method of backfilling trenches and pits to required specifications. The procedure covers works in both public highway and private land.		
Procedure Reference	MS01	Issue Number	02
Issue Date	23/01/25	Review Period	Annually
Originated By	Wayne Greenwell	Approved By	Josh McDonald

This method statement has been developed, and must be read, in conjunction with the risk assessment manual. Particular attention should be given to the following risk assessments:

RA #1 – Underground Services	RA #26 – Manual Handling
RA #2 – Overhead Services	RA #63 – Loading and Unloading
RA #22 – Lorry Mounted Loaders	RA #79 – Lifting Equipment
RA #24 – Use of Vibrating Hand Tools	RA #90 – Working with Grabs / Hiabs

Relevant Documentation

New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
HAUC Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in the Highway 1992
Safety at Street Works and Road Works – A Code of Practice

Emergency Arrangement Details

 Fire/Evacuation	 First Aid	 Pollution/Spill	Other
SP08 – Emergency Preparedness & Response	HSEI01 - Emergency Information	MS04 – Spill Response	SP08 – Emergency Preparedness & Response

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

							
Head (EN397)	Foot (BS EN345-1)	Protective Clothing	Hi-Vis Jacket	Hand (BS EN388)	Eye (EN166)	Hearing (EN 352-1)	Dust Mask (EN149)
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Other PPE Requirements: Hard hats during lifting operations and in excavations. Goggles during compaction.

Construction Dust (Note: construction dust is harmful and can lead to fatal lung diseases such as silicosis)

Will the work create dust or fumes?	Yes, during loading/unloading and compaction
Identify control measures to minimize dust/fumes:	
If dust cannot be avoided, identify required RPE:	EN149 dust mask during dust creating operations

Hazardous Materials

Are hazardous materials to be used?	No
Are COSHH/DSEAR data sheets available?	Yes

Relevant COSHH Risk Assessments

COSHH #2 - Aggregate	

Permit to Work

Identify any Permit to Work required for this activity?	Confined spaces (if excavation deeper than 1.2m)
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Description of Safe Working Method

All team leaders must have Operative qualifications under New Roads and Street Works Act for Backfilling. All hiab operators must be competent, trained and in possession of a recognized lorry loader qualification. All operational supervisory staff must have Supervisory qualifications under New Roads and Street Works Act for Backfilling. Additionally, all supervisory staff will be provided with a copy of the appropriate HAUC specifications for backfilling and reinstatement in the public highway to enable the appropriate advice to be provided if required.

1. Each day all vehicles, plant, tools, materials and equipment (including lifting equipment) should be checked for safety, soundness and fitness for purpose prior to commencement of work.
2. Ensure that the flashing beacon on the grab wagon is in operation well in advance of entering the site and at all times during operations on site. Park the vehicle safely within the working space. Hiabs should not straddle an open trench or work at the edge of a trench.
3. Before any work is commenced on site a Site-Specific Risk Assessment should be carried out. Any risks that cant have control measures implemented should be escalated to your first line manager.
4. The SSRA must account and plan for safe lifting considerations in line with the generic Risk Assessment for Grabs and Hiabs. Overhead services must be considered and work must not take place within 15m of non-insulated power cables on steel towers and 9m on wooden poles without permission from the electricity distribution company. Safe working areas should be established to ensure that no person enters the swing radius of the hiab during lifting operations, particularly the banksman. No person may be allowed under a suspended load. The hiab's safe working limit must not be exceeded. Stabilising devices must be fully deployed during all lifts.
5. Inspect Sign, Lighting and Guarding to ensure the site is in accordance with Chapter 8 and any permit conditions. Ensure the works are safely barriered off and remain so for the duration of works.
6. An inspection of the excavations to be backfilled should be carried out to ensure that they are suitable for backfilling. Any water in the bottom of the trench must be removed prior to placing any materials.
7. Any trench protection installed must be removed in a staged manner such that the safety of the excavation and any personnel working in or near it are maintained at all times.
8. Where pipework is installed in the trench, a fine fill layer free of sharp stones must be placed around and to a compacted depth of 75mm above the pipe. Care must be taken to ensure that the fine fill below and at the side of the pipe is adequately compacted. Consider hand compaction when in close proximity to cast iron pipes.
9. Suitable marker tape/tracing mesh as specified by the relevant Network operator (Gas, Water, Electric, Telecoms ETC) should be installed at least 150mm above the pipe.
10. Wherever possible consideration should be given to utilising suitably excavated materials in the backfill layers subject to the requirements of HAUC specification for Reinstatement of Openings in Highways 1992.
11. Where pipes and ducts are crossing the trench, care must be taken while backfilling round them to ensure that they are not damaged during compaction and that the material surrounding them is adequately compacted.
12. The selection of materials, the correct depths of the backfill and surface courses and compaction layers and methods should be those specified in HAUC specification for Reinstatement of Openings in Highways 1992.
13. Materials should be selected so as to replace as far as possible the stiffness and density of the existing carriageway. Completed interim and permanent reinstatements should be flush with adjacent surfaces and should show no significant deviation from the profile of the adjacent surfaces.
14. Materials which are organic, perishable, hazardous, frozen, combustible or highly plastic should not be used.
15. In flexible roads imported granular materials may be used to form a unified sub base and road base. The moisture content of such materials must be strictly controlled.
16. Materials should be laid in the layer thicknesses appropriate to the material type and compacted using equipment suitable for the job with the correct number of passes for the equipment. Compaction equipment should be used in line with the risk assessment for vibrating handheld tools. Rotate the work, keep hands and arms warm, rub hands to promote circulation, don't smoke during operation and observe maximum usage limits.
17. If foam concrete is used, consideration must be given to preventing employees, members of the public and animals from becoming trapped in the uncured material. Protective measures could include covering the trench with heavy-duty mesh or plastic sheeting firmly fixed either side of the trench.
18. Materials shall be disbursed to laying areas by mechanical means i.e. hiab clamshell or mechanical shovel or by manual means i.e. wheelbarrows. If spoil is located out of reach of the hiab clamshell it shall be transported to a suitable lifting location via mechanical means ie. Mechanical dumper or by manual means ie. Wheelbarrows. The controls within the risk assessment for manual handling should be observed during all manual handling tasks.
19. Spoil shall be deposited directly, with the use of the hiab clamshell, into the tipper body in order to prevent spillage over the sides of the body into pedestrianised or carriageway areas. Under no circumstances should any item be offered up to the clamshell bucket manually for gripping. Care should be taken to ensure that the load is distributed evenly throughout the body of the vehicle at all times and that overloading does not occur.
20. Surrounding areas to be cleared and areas to be swept clean at the end of each job.
21. Before leaving site ensure that all Sign, Lighting and Guarding is compliant, and the site is left in safe condition.

