

## BEFORE

Misses chance to announce subject

Merely describing the attachment delays the document's main message

The long reference and concentration on process delay the finding

Document's main message lurks at the bitter end

To: California Department of Transportation

Attached please find Gigantic Construction Company's excavation plan for any trench excavation in excess of 4 feet in depth. The plan includes Gigantic's Excavation Permit, the Site-Specific Excavation Permit Notification Form, and details showing the sloping methods to be used, when required.

In conformance with Section 1541.1 Appendix A of the Construction Safety Orders, Gigantic has performed visual tests to determine the classification of the native material. Upon visual inspection, Gigantic has found the soil to be a cohesive soil composed of high clay content with varying amounts of silt. Gigantic performed the thumb penetration test and found the soil to be of a Type C Classification.

From Table C-1 of Section 1541.1 Appendix B of the Construction Safety Orders, a Type C soil has a maximum allowable slope of 1.5H: IV. The excavation will have a maximum depth of 10 feet. The competent persons for the excavation will be Rob Landreth, project superintendent, and myself. In conclusion Gigantic will conform to all safety requirements of the Construction Safety Orders.

## AFTER

To: California Department of Transportation  
Subject: Plan meets requirements for excavating deep trenches

Our attached plan for excavating trenches deeper than 4 feet meets your Construction Safety Orders:

- **Soil classification is Type C.** Our visual inspection found the soil cohesive, mostly clay, with varying amounts of silt. By doing the thumb penetration test, we classified the soil as Type C. (Orders section 1541.1 Appendix A)
- **Plan meets allowable slope and depth.** For Type C soil, trenches must slope no more than 1.5H: IV and be 10 feet deep or less. (Orders section 1541.1 Appendix B, Table C-1)

Please see the attached excavation plan for our excavation permit, the site notice, and details on how we'll slope a trench if required. The competent persons for this excavation are Rob Landreth, project superintendent, and me.

Informative subject announces content

Now there's a point to the attachment: it meets requirements

Bullets and meaty headings highlight key ideas

Now references to orders are shorter and *follow* key ideas

Secondary details are out of the way

We teach writers in technical fields to organize and write clearly for a broad range of readers