

Press Release

Outrage Builds After Sunesis Construction is Fined Again For Trenching Violations in Indiana!

Widespread Anger at Ohio Company's Apparent Continued Disregard for Worker Safety and OSHA Regulations

Indianapolis, February 8, 2010: Anger is being expressed throughout the Indiana construction industry after it was learned that Sunesis Construction Company, Inc., an Ohio-based contractor, was fined \$8,750 by Indiana OSHA on November 16, 2009 for three (3) violations of trenching operations at another one of its Indiana construction sites. This is the most recent in a history of fines and violations by this company for the same or similar safety violations, including two worker deaths in 2005. This most recent violation is considered the final outrage by many in the Indiana construction industry.

Indiana House Majority Leader, Russ Stilwell commented on this situation, *"It's quite troubling that this one contractor seems to be in the news over and over. There is simply no excuse for any company ignoring work place safety regulations. That type of company attitude gets workers killed."* Sunesis Construction has been awarded millions of dollars in Indiana highway construction contracts over the last few years, including *Major Moves* projects.

Pete Rimsans, Executive Director of the Indiana State Building and Construction Trades Council, said of the most recent Sunesis violations, *"This truly is an outrageous situation. How many workers have to die or get injured by these apparent repeat violators before the folks with oversight responsibility take real action. This is simply unacceptable and needs to be addressed immediately."*

Even a quick review of records at the OSHA web site reveals a troubling history of safety violations and fines. Sunesis was fined over \$130,000 by OSHA after two workers died in separate accidents on Sunesis work sites in 2005. In fact, Sunesis received citations for as

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many as 23 safety violations in 2005. In September 2008, IOSHA fined Sunesis \$7,000 for unsafe trenching operations at a Connersville work site. In November 2009, Sunesis was fined \$1,100 for violations at its Aurora work site. It is unclear why this fine was later reduced to \$585. In the most recent case, the fines amounted to \$8,750 and were issued for violations at a second Connersville work site.

Sunesis' dismal safety record has been highlighted in at least three (3) recent reports.

- **April 2008** - Sunesis' safety issues were highlighted in a report by the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee named, "***Discounting Death: OSHA's Failure to Punish Safety Violations that Kill Workers.***"
- **July 2008** - Sunesis was the subject of an extensive report by Indiana Construction Information Network (INCIN) titled, "***Major Mistakes: Preliminary Report on Sunesis Construction Company, Inc. in the Indiana Construction Market.***"
- **April 2006** - Sunesis was named in the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (NCOSH) Workplace Health and Safety "***Dirty Dozen***" report as one of a dozen U.S. employers with a history of severe health and safety violations.

According to the 2006 NCOSH report, "*worker fatalities from trench cave-ins are well recognized in the industry and totally preventable.*" Bureau of Labor Statistics reporting shows that between 2003 and 2008, 218 workers among various employers nationwide died due to trench collapse accidents.

All of the Sunesis reports may be viewed and downloaded at the *INCIN* web site: www.incin.org

All of the reports as well as videos may be viewed at the *Sunesis Exposed* web site at: www.sunesisexposed.com

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