



#1 WHY NO-TOUCH TOOLS ARE CRITICAL IN TRENCH SHORING OPERATIONS

Underground construction sites are high-risk environments where workers routinely interact with suspended loads, heavy materials, and moving equipment. These tasks often require guiding, aligning, or steadying objects by hand, which puts workers directly in harm's way. Hand and finger injuries are among the most common and costly incidents in the industry.

No-touch tools are specifically designed to eliminate the need for direct hand contact during high-risk operations. By allowing workers to guide, maneuver, and position suspended loads from a safe distance, these tools greatly reduce exposure to pinch points, crushing hazards, and lacerations. Just as importantly, they help eliminate the instinctive urge to reach out and catch a falling load—a dangerous reflex that often leads to severe injuries.

The importance of no-touch tools becomes even clearer when you consider the cost of injuries. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average hand injury claim exceeds \$6,000, and lost-time workers' compensation claims can reach \$7,500. More serious injuries, such as disabling damage to a hand or finger, can cost up to \$26,000. The combined direct and indirect cost of a laceration may exceed \$32,000. In extreme cases, such as a severed tendon, expenses can surpass \$70,000.

Beyond the financial burden, these injuries have a lasting human impact. Each incident does more than affect your bottom line—it can change a person's life. A team member may suffer permanent damage, miss valuable time with their family, or endure a long and painful recovery. Many of these crush-point injuries could have been prevented with the right no-touch tools in place.

#2 IDENTIFYING APPLICATIONS AND APPLYING NO-TOUCH PRACTICES

The first step in implementing no-touch tools effectively is learning to recognize where they are most needed. In trench shoring, these opportunities are often hiding in plain sight. Any task that requires workers to guide, position, or steady a load with their hands—especially around heavy equipment or near an open excavation—should be evaluated for no-touch alternatives. Common examples include rigging and signaling during crane lifts, aligning pipe or conduit, and moving awkward suspended objects such as steel



trench plates and trench shields. These are high-risk scenarios where hands are frequently placed near crush points, under suspended loads, or in the line of fire.

To identify these tasks, start by observing repetitive manual movements where control or positioning is involved. Review job hazard analyses (JHAs) with a focus on hand placement and body positioning. When these patterns appear, they are clear indicators that a no-touch solution could improve safety. Once identified, applying the right tools and training crews on proper usage can dramatically reduce risk and help build a stronger safety culture on-site.

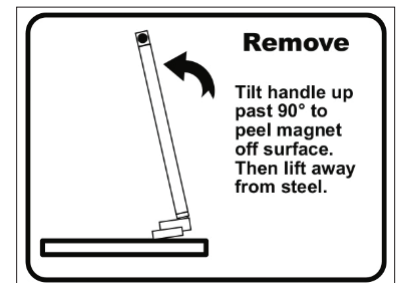
#3 TOOL TYPES, USAGE, AND CARE

No-touch tools come in a variety of sizes, types, and grip orientations. When selecting the right tool, it is important to consider the weight, shape, and behavior of the load. The tool must have the appropriate size, structural integrity, and strength rating to maintain safe and effective control from a distance. Additionally, the grip orientation should allow the operator to maintain control while still enabling a quick and easy hand release if needed.

For suspended load control, commonly used tools include rigid magnetic and non-magnetic push/pull poles. Other frequently used no-touch tools include material-handling magnets, jaw-style gripping and repositioning tools, tubular alignment tools, snares, and shepherd's hooks.

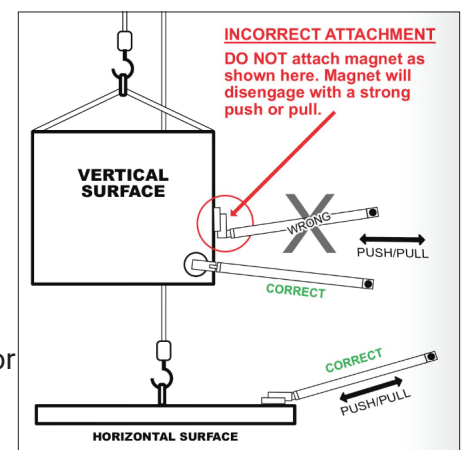
A widely adopted solution gaining momentum in the trench shoring industry is the use of rigid magnetic load control tools. These tools enhance both safety and operational efficiency on job sites and within trench shoring manufacturing facilities.

Rigid magnetic tools are designed to help guide trench plates, shields, and shoring boxes from a safe distance. They give the user full push-and-pull control of suspended loads without placing themselves in danger. To use the tool properly, gently set the magnet onto a clean, flat steel surface. Avoid slamming it. Make sure the handle is securely fastened and oriented for comfortable use, especially when positioning equipment near an open trench. When it is time to detach, tilt the handle upward past 90 degrees to peel the magnet off, then lift it away cleanly. Always keep hands and fingers clear of the magnet during use to avoid pinch points, and inspect the tool regularly for damage or debris on the magnet face. When used correctly, a rigid magnetic pole improves both control and safety around heavy trench shoring equipment.



In applications where the load is not made of steel or lacks a suitable attachment point, magnetic tools may not be the most effective. In these situations, non-magnetic alternatives are essential for maintaining no-touch control and avoiding crush points. Common non-magnetic no-touch tools include taglines, push/pull sticks, and shepherd hooks.

A rigid, non-conductive control device designed to push, pull, hook, or snag suspended loads without direct hand contact is one option. Used properly, the appropriate attachment for the load—such as a notched chain hook for managing slings, or a push/pull head for directional control—is securely fastened to the handle. The tool is engaged by sliding the attachment over or past a hardpoint to ensure it is captured before applying force. Maintain a firm grip and steady control throughout use, and never attempt to pry or force movement with the tool. In scenarios where magnetic tools are not viable, hook-style no-touch tools offer a practical and effective alternative for protecting workers.





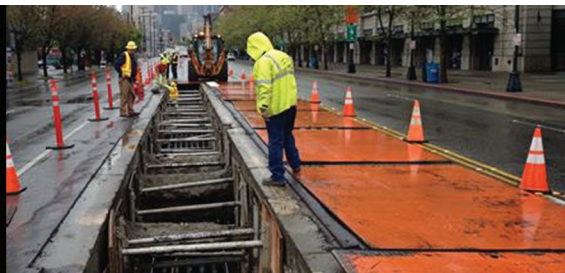
In high-risk environments like trench shoring operations, hand injuries are very common and often preventable. No-touch tools offer a simple yet effective layer of protection, allowing crews to guide and control loads safely without placing hands near danger zones. Identifying high-risk tasks, selecting the right tools, and ensuring proper use and maintenance are key steps in reducing injuries, improving safety, and protecting both people and productivity.

While the tools mentioned here are most often used around open excavations and shoring equipment, the range of tools available includes solutions for material handling and other applications where keeping hands and feet out of harm's way while guiding loads is critical. We encourage you to explore these options and adopt a safer, hands-free approach across your operations.

This safety guidance is provided by NAXSA Member, ADAMAR, whose products include SAFE-T-STIK and SLING-STIK.



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