

Buried Utilities

IDENTIFY

There are often deadly hazards lurking underground on excavation sites. Rupturing or breaking underground utilities such as electrical power cables and pipelines can result in serious injuries or even death.

A gas leak forced the evacuation of more than two dozen homes on Troy Avenue and Mountain Avenue, in Winnipeg's North End, on Monday (August 27, 2018). After a contractor accidentally cut a gas service line around 9 a.m., six homes on Troy Avenue and 22 homes on Mountain Avenue were evacuated for precautionary reasons. Manitoba Hydro crews finished repairs around 1 p.m. and began letting residents back into their homes.

COMMUNICATE AND CONTROL

Are you familiar with the steps you can take to avoid injury around buried utilities on a work site?

If you plan to excavate or dig into the ground for any reason deeper than 15 cm, complete a line locate online or call 1-800-940-3447 for help with your request.

Before digging look for paint or flags marking locations of electrical lines. Electrical lines should also have a warning device, such as a range control or limit. You should know how each is marked.

Review marked-out areas. They may not be exact. If not sure, call the utility company to verify before digging.

Plan to dig by hand when working within 2 feet of a mark-out, to make sure you do not hit a utility line or conduit with heavy equipment. Ask your supervisor to identify the expert who will review the work area before work begins and as needed during your shift.

Remember when digging, look for:

- Signs of previous digging
- Changes in soil types
- Asphalt patches or depressions
- Concrete, plastic, or gravel
- Look for electrical lines and other utilities. Electrical lines should be marked with red paint or flags. Check with your supervisor to confirm the utilities have been properly marked.
- Look for gas lines. They should be marked with yellow paint or flags.

- If you hit a line, you must report it! If it's a gas line, evacuate everyone, secure the area, and call the fire department.

LOCATE MARK LEGEND

WHITE - proposed excavation

PINK - temporary survey markings

RED - electrical, lighting cables

YELLOW - gas, oil, steam

ORANGE - telephone, cable, TV, signals, alarms

BLUE - potable water

GREEN - sanitary and storm sewer, culverts

PURPLE - reclaimed water, irrigation, slurry

For more information visit the Manitoba Common Ground Alliance <http://www.manitobaacga.com/>

The Manitoba Common Ground Alliance (MCGA) is a non-profit organization established to lead the development of consistent practices and coordination of activities to ensure the highest possible standards of public safety, worker safety and damage prevention in connection with underground infrastructure.

THE QUIZ:

Buried Utilities

Answers are at the bottom of the page. Present these questions to attendees and have them answer as a group. Have a discussion to ensure everyone understands the risks and how to control them.

1. If you plan to excavate or dig into the ground for any reason deeper than _____, you must complete a line locate online or call 1800 940 3347.

- A) 15 cm
- B) 30 m
- C) 25 cm
- D) 100 millimeters

2. Within _____ full working days, the utility owners or their authorized locator will contact you to arrange a time to meet and discuss your dig area, or they will locate and mark the buried lines on your jobsite when they are in the area.

- E) 3
- F) 5
- G) 1
- H) 10

3. You can expand the locate outside area marked if asked to do so by the contractor onsite.

TRUE _____ FALSE _____

4. What is the color coding for electrical and lighting cable locates?

- A) Red
- B) Pink
- C) Yellow
- D) Green

5. What is the color coding for gas, oil, and steam locates?

- A) Red
- B) Purple
- C) Yellow
- D) Orange

Facts & Tips

Advanced Notice:

You must notify the one call center that you intend to dig a minimum of three working days prior to the start of a digging project.

Days Valid:

You have a maximum thirty days with the owner/operators permission to locate marks [paint, flags, etc.] are valid while they are maintained and clearly visible. Determined by regional legislation and best practices.

During Excavation:

- Keep the Facilities Locate form at the site until the excavation and backfill are complete.
- Ensure everyone on the worksite is aware of the presence of all electric and natural gas lines.
- The locate markings must be maintained and kept visible by the person or contractor doing the excavating. Be careful that site operators do not remove the locate markings.

ANSWERS
1. A 2. A 3. FALSE 4. A 5. C



FOR THE RECORD

Date of Meeting: _____

Location: _____ Start time: _____ Finish Time: _____

Topic: _____ Meeting Leader: _____

In attendance (please print):

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Follow us on Social Media, visit our website at constructionsafety.ca, or give us a call for more tools, resources and information.

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