

# Underground utilities

List underground utility hazards on site.

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## Explain dangers

Buried gas and electrical lines present a serious risk of injury and death.

Utility pipes, conduit, and cable may be damaged by:

- Digging without locates or with inaccurate locates
- Careless excavation once the utilities have been located and marked
- Failure to support exposed utilities once they have been uncovered.

Breaks in buried services threaten not only workers but also the general public. It can also cause considerable property damage.

## Identify controls

The basic idea is to CALL BEFORE YOU DIG.

- Ask utilities to locate and mark their underground services. That includes gas, water, electrical, cable TV, telephone, and pipelines.
- Utilities generally offer a free service for locating and marking buried services with stakes, flags, or paint. These markers indicate the approximate centre line of the underground service.
- Utilities also provide a diagram of the locate information. Keep records of all your locates on the job.

Once the underground service is located, it's our job to uncover it. This must be done by hand digging. Do not use excavating equipment to find the service.

If we use a pressurized water/vacuum system to expose the buried service, we have to check with the utility first to make sure it's safe.

In some cases, the utility may supervise our digging and excavation. This is a requirement when working with fibreoptic cable.

Once the service has been uncovered and its location determined at several points along its length, then excavating equipment can be used.

Exposed utility pipes, conduit, and cable must be supported to keep them from falling or breaking. When construction contracts don't specify the method of support, ask the utility for its requirements.

## Demonstrate

With your crew, review the information in a locate provided by a utility for an underground service on site. Tell them about Ontario One Call.

For more information on utility damage prevention, go to [orcga.com](http://orcga.com) and download a free copy of ORCGA's *Best Practices*.

### ONE CALL

Contact Ontario One Call (On1Call) to notify all utilities with underground services in the area where we want to dig.

e-Ticket Locate Requests

1-800-400-2255

[www.on1call.com](http://www.on1call.com)

According to the *Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012*, most underground services locates will be provided when you contact On1Call. There are some exceptions, however. Ask On1Call if any of these are in your area.