

# SAFETY TALK

## [underground utility locates]

Some of us have been on jobs that have come to a halt when someone hits an underground gas or electrical line. If we're lucky, no one gets hurt.

Buried gas and electrical lines present a serious risk of injury to workers who contact them accidentally.

The first step is to call the utility owner before digging.

It's the contractor's job to ask utilities to locate and mark their underground services. That includes gas, oil, water, electrical, cable TV and telephone.

Utilities generally offer a free service for locating and marking buried services with labelled stakes, flags or paint. These markings indicate the centre line of the underground service.

Utilities also provide a diagram of the locate information. Once the service has been located and marked, it's our job to uncover it. This must be done by hand-digging. Never use excavating equipment to find the service.

Once the service has been uncovered and its actual location determined at several points along its length, excavating equipment can be used in areas adjacent to the service. If the service poses a hazard and cannot be shut off or disconnected, the utility provider may supervise the digging and excavation.

The utility provider must be present if fibre optic cable is being uncovered.

Utility pipes, conduit and cable exposed in a trench or excavation must be supported to keep them from failing or breaking. When construction contracts don't specify the method of support, ask the utility provider for their requirements.

Breaks in electrical, gas, water and pipelines can threaten not only construction crews, but also the general public. To avoid the risk of serious injuries and fatalities, **always call before digging.**

*[Instructor to review procedures for requesting locates and excavating.]*

In New Brunswick, the law regarding underground utility line or piping can be found in General Regulation 91-191 under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, section 180.

# Attendance Sheet

Department and Division		
Meeting location		Name/Title of employee conducting meeting
Date (yyyy-mm-dd)	Time	Shift
Number in team/department		Number attending

## Other safety issues or suggestions made by employees


## Record of those attending

Name (please print)	Signature
1.	
2.	
3.	
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Follow-up actions/remarks
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Signature	Date
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