

Excavation safety around natural gas



Safety.

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people on it.



FORTIS BC™

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Steps to stay safe

1. Call BC One Call at **1-800-474-6886** or ***6886** on a cell phone to request gas line location records. This is a requirement of FortisBC and provincial gas safety regulations. If the records do not arrive within two business days, call Public Underground Location Services at **1-888-822-6555**.
2. Have gas line information on site during the excavation.
3. Use the gas line information to locate and mark lines with paint or stakes and maintain them until digging is underway.
4. **HAND DIG FIRST** to expose gas lines before using mechanical equipment.

You could damage much more than a gas line

Excavating is serious business. That's why it's critical to take due care.

Knowing where natural gas pipelines are located before you start excavating is the first step to ensure safety on the job. Do this by calling BC One Call to request underground gas line information.

Once you've received pipeline maps, you should ensure a safe work site by hand digging to expose the gas line before using mechanical equipment.

Hitting a pipeline not only threatens the safety of the public and your workers, but can also impact the environment and cost you money. So take the necessary precautions, play it safe, and call before you dig.

BC ONE CALL

1-800-474-6886 Cell: *6886

Fax-in service: 604-451-0344

Your responsibilities

Whether you're digging up a major intersection or installing fence posts, B.C. regulations require you to take three steps before you start digging:

1. Call BC One Call and request line location information. The call is free.
2. Use the information to mark the location of buried gas lines.
3. Hand dig to expose the gas line.

Guidelines for locating and hand digging

Before beginning any excavation or boring, you must locate the buried gas line and hand dig to expose the line. The BC Safety Authority has approved these guidelines for locating and hand digging.

You MUST:

- have gas line information on site
- identify the location of the gas line and mark the line with paint or stakes until digging is underway
- hand dig across the boundary limits of the locate area in cuts no more than 0.3 m deep

You MAY:

- use an electronic pipe locator to confirm approximate location of the gas line
- use mechanical equipment ONLY to remove surface cover OR clear away loosened material down to the limits of the hand dig area before resuming hand digging (see FIG. 1)
- use hydro-vac excavation equipment within the boundary limit

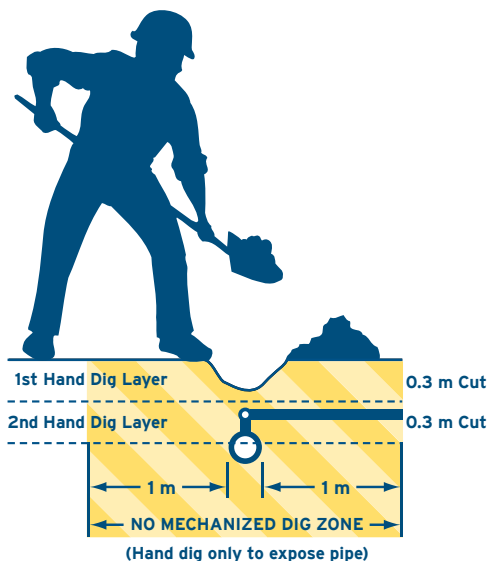


FIG. 1 - Hand digging for a gas line

Do not use mechanical equipment to deepen the excavation past the hand dig area within the boundary limits.

When exposing buried gas lines, the “no mechanized dig zone” refers to the area equal to the diameter of the gas pipe, plus one metre on either side of the gas line’s indicated location extending upwards to the surface.

Hand dig within “the zone” to expose the pipe, using manual equipment and tools. Mechanized equipment should only be used to break the surface.

Safety laws and regulations

WorkSafeBC and the BC Safety Authority *require* you to obtain buried gas line location information and hand dig to expose the lines.

For specific information about regulations that govern excavating or working near pipelines in B.C., contact:

BC Safety Authority
Safety Standards Act and Gas Safety Regulation
safetyauthority.ca

WorkSafeBC
Occupational Health and Safety Regulation
worksafebc.com

BC Oil and Gas Commission
Oil and Gas Activities Act and Regulations
bcogc.ca

Line location assistance

You are responsible for contacting BC One Call and requesting line location information. However, FortisBC will provide on-site locates on gas pipelines and temporary surface marking or staking when:

- detailed records are not available
- the information on the plans or listing of facility locations is unclear or the gas installation is not where FortisBC records indicate
- there is an emergency repair of another utility in progress (e.g., damaged water main or sewer)
- the excavator has been unsuccessful in hand-locating our main or service
- the planned excavation is within 10 m of an intermediate pressure pipeline or is within 40 m of the edge of a transmission pressure pipeline operating above 100 psi (690 kPa). See section on obtaining a FortisBC permit on next page.

All requests for location information must be submitted through BC One Call at **1-800-474-6886**, ***6886** on a cell phone, or faxed to **604-451-0344**, a minimum of three business days prior to the scheduled start of an excavation.

If your project is delayed and your excavation work has not started within *10 working days* of receiving gas line information from FortisBC, you must verify the location information through BC One Call before beginning work.

Obtaining a FortisBC gas line permit

You must have:

- written permission from FortisBC when working within 40 m of a pipeline operating above 100 psi (690 kPa)
- a permit from FortisBC when working:
 - within 10 m of a transmission pressure pipeline
 - within 2 m of an intermediate pressure pipeline
 - within a FortisBC statutory right of way

For permit applications and more information

Lower Mainland or Interior:

Local calls	604-576-7021
Fax	604-592-7658
Toll-free	1-877-599-0996
Toll-free fax	1-877-212-1312
Email	rightofway@fortisbc.com
Web	fortisbc.com/rightofway

Vancouver Island, Texada Island, Sunshine Coast, Powell River and Whistler:

Toll-free	1-877-599-0996
Fax	250-388-6876

Emergency repairs

If you are conducting an emergency repair to another utility—for example, a damaged water main or sewer line—and require gas line location information from FortisBC, contact BC One Call at **1-800-474-6886** and FortisBC will be notified immediately.



REMEMBER:

Contractors are responsible for notifying FortisBC and WorkSafeBC of damage to gas lines. FortisBC may seek to recover all associated costs from any person or organization who damages a FortisBC underground utility.

Emergency checklist

If gas is escaping from a ruptured line:

- Shut off machinery and all sources of ignition.
- Evacuate—move people upwind if possible—keep cars and bystanders away from area.
- Call the FortisBC natural gas emergency line immediately at **1-800-663-9911**.
- Don't attempt repairs or operate underground gas valves.
- Call 911 or the fire department.
- Warn people in nearby buildings where gas might enter through drains, etc.
- Evacuate the building, as well as neighbouring buildings if gas is thought to be entering.

If a pipe has been struck, jarred or pulled, or the tracer-wire, protective wrapping or the pipe surface has been damaged:

- Stop all work and call FortisBC.
- Check for the smell or sound of escaping gas in the area.
- DO NOT backfill. FortisBC must physically check the integrity of the piping system and repair any damage.



BC One Call toll-free: **1-800-474-6886**

Cell phone: ***6886**

Natural gas emergencies (24 hours):


1-800-663-9911

FortisBC Permit Desk: **1-877-599-0996**

*FortisBC acknowledges the assistance and co-operation of
the British Columbia Safety Authority.*



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