**Northbridge®**
Insurance

# UNDERGROUND UTILITIES

## CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

**Underground utilities can include but are not limited to the following: communication lines, power lines, natural gas pipes, sewers and water pipes and alarm systems. Each type of underground utility presents its own hazards and protection problems. There is a significant potential for injury to workers from explosion, fire, asphyxiation and electrocution, as well as other potential large losses in the form of damaged equipment and business interruption.**

### Underground utility

Damage to underground utilities from excavation and trenching activities is more common than is generally believed. Many construction projects require some degree of excavation or trenching, and all efforts must be made to prevent damage to these utilities.

Establish a written procedure for conducting utility locates, which includes written documentation that the utility locate has been completed. Simply receiving verbal confirmation is insufficient. Should a utility become damaged, it is very important to maintain documentation proving that all necessary precautions were taken.

Locate documentation should include, at a minimum:

- The originally requested excavation date
- The locate request number
- A complete and accurate drawing depicting the location of the underground infrastructure for the area identified in the locate request
- The date that the locator completed the locate request
- The time period during which the locate documentation and locate markings are valid
- Any other information required by the local authority

Whenever excavation or trenching is performed or heavy equipment is moved, the necessary precautions must be taken to identify utilities and minimize the potential for damage. An emergency plan should also be established in the event that damage occurs. All excavation, trenching or underground construction activities have the potential to damage utilities.

The contractor working with the owners of the underground installations must identify the utilities, locate them, and determine the potential hazards and methods of controlling them. A simple and effective preventative measure is to require workers to fill out a checklist identifying all utility services that must be contacted before any work begins.

**The American Public Works Association (APWA) provides uniform colour coding for easy identification.**
International colour code for marking underground utility lines

- ☐ **White:** proposed excavation
- ☐ **Pink:** temporary survey markings
- ☐ **Red:** electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables
- ☐ **Yellow**: gas, oil, petroleum, or gaseous materials
- ☐ **Orange:** communication, alarm/signal lines, cables/conduit
- ☐ **Blue:** potable water
- ☐ **Purple:** reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines
- ☐ **Green:** sewers and drain lines

As a tool for you and your employees, we have created a sample Underground Utilities checklist that you may copy and distribute to your employees and incorporate into your regular work procedures.

For more information on making your business safer, contact our Risk Services team at **1.833.692.4111** or visit us at **www.northbridgeinsurance.ca**.

## UNDERGROUND UTILITIES CHECKLIST

### Job details

_____
YOUR COMPANY NAME

_____
PARTY THAT WILL BE DRILLING/EXCAVATING (IF NOT YOURSELF)

_____
NAME OF PERSON REQUESTING THE LOCATE(S)

_____
PARTY THAT WILL BE DRILLING/EXCAVATING (IF NOT YOURSELF)

_____
DATE OF EXPIRY FOR THE LOCATE(S)

### Utility contacted

**Communications company 1 (telephone, cable, internet...)**

Phone: _____   Date: M M / D D / Y Y Y Y   Time: ☐ AM  ☐ PM
Operator/reference #: _____

**Communications company 2 (telephone, cable, internet...)**

Phone: _____   Date: M M / D D / Y Y Y Y   Time: ☐ AM  ☐ PM
Operator/reference #: _____

**Electric**

Phone: _____   Date: M M / D D / Y Y Y Y   Time: ☐ AM  ☐ PM
Operator/reference #: _____

**Gas**

Phone: _____   Date: M M / D D / Y Y Y Y   Time: ☐ AM  ☐ PM
Operator/reference #: _____

**Water & sewer**

Phone: _____   Date: M M / D D / Y Y Y Y   Time: ☐ AM  ☐ PM
Operator/reference #: _____

### Notes

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