

Excavation safety is your responsibility

Striking or rupturing an underground utility line while digging can create an unsafe situation for you, your employees and the general public. It can also seriously delay your work schedule. When planning an excavation, verify the location of natural gas pipelines to ensure safety on the job.

Excavation regulations

- BC Safety Authority—Safety Standards Act and Gas Safety Regulation
- WorkSafeBC—Occupational Health & Safety Regulation (See Part 20: Construction, Excavation and Demolition)
- Oil and Gas Activities Act and associated regulations
- Terms of existing right of way agreements and crossing permits

Review these acts and regulations at bclaws.ca.

Permits

If you're working within a right of way or in an area within 30 m of a pipe(s) pressurized at 100 psi (700 kPa) or greater, permission is required before digging.

You must obtain:

- written permission from FortisBC when working within 30 m of a pipeline operating above 100 psi (700 kPa)
- a permit from FortisBC when working:
 - within 10 m of a transmission pressure (TP) pipeline
 - within 2 m of an intermediate pressure (IP) pipeline
 - within a FortisBC statutory right of way

If you're working within 10 m of British Columbia Oil and Gas Commission regulated lines, FortisBC must perform the locate.

For permit applications and more information, call **1-877-599-0996** or visit fortisbc.com/rightofway.

Definitions

TP and IP pipelines

All pipelines that operate in excess of 100 psi (700 kPa).

Distribution pressure

All pipelines under 100 psi (700 kPa).

Requirements for blasting in the vicinity of a natural gas installation

The notification period for blasting does not start until after a blasting plan has been provided to FortisBC. A blasting plan must be submitted by the contractor's blasting engineer and contain the following:

- location of blasting relative to FortisBC natural gas facilities
- type and size of charge and delay
- declaration that the blasting plan is based on the utility information provided, local ground concerns and theory
- confirmation that the blast will not damage the utility

Call or click before you dig

1. Call BC One Call at **1-800-474-6886** or ***6886** on the TELUS or Rogers mobile network, or click on bconecall.ca to request gas and other utility line location information at least two business days before you begin your excavation. This is required under provincial gas safety regulations.
2. Use the information provided to mark the location of buried gas lines. If you need help locating the lines, call FortisBC for assistance at **1-888-822-6555**.
3. Hand dig to expose the gas lines before using mechanical equipment. (see FIG. 1)

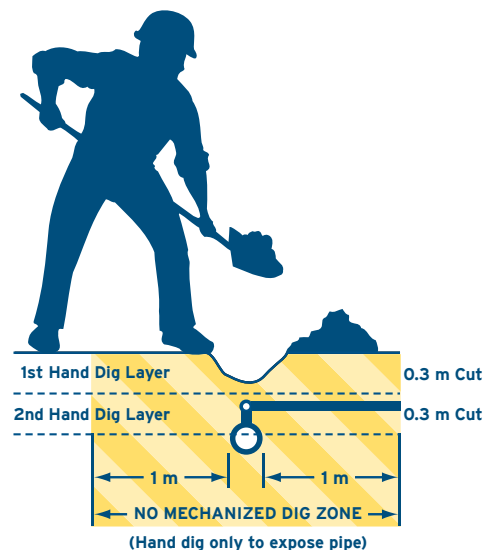


FIG. 1 - Hand digging for a gas line

Don't guess where it's safe to dig

Whether you're digging up a major intersection, installing fence posts, landscaping or building a deck, it's important to know what lies underground before you disturb the surface.

Don't dig blindly. Whatever construction project you're undertaking, it's your responsibility to obtain gas line location information.

Did you know?

Provincial regulations require hand digging, to expose buried utility lines before digging with powered excavation equipment.

For more safety tips, visit fortisbc.com/safety.

Safe digging practices

1. Electronically locate and mark lines with paint or stakes until digging is underway.
2. Hand dig to locate and expose buried gas lines before excavating with powered excavation equipment (see FIG. 1).
3. Do not use powered equipment within 1 m of the gas line when locating and exposing. Mechanized equipment should only be used to break the surface (see Section 39(7) of the Gas Safety Regulation).
4. Wherever possible, operate powered excavation equipment to dig parallel to the direction of the gas line.
5. If it is not practical to hand dig, hydrovacating is acceptable. Take care when hydrovacating to avoid damaging pipe coating or wrapping.
6. You must obtain additional location information and approvals if you wish to excavate outside the area for which gas line location records have been provided.
7. You are not authorized to cut or remove inactive natural gas lines.
8. Notify FortisBC when a pipe or the coating is damaged, so an inspection and repair can be done.
9. If your project is delayed and 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.

Warning: Fittings may protrude from the pipe and can be easily damaged by excavation equipment.



If you damage a natural gas pipe

Contractors are responsible for notifying FortisBC and WorkSafeBC of damage to natural gas lines. FortisBC may seek to recover all associated costs from any person or organization who damages a FortisBC underground utility. However, any person or organization that calls BC One Call, uses hand tools to dig and still damages a gas line may have repair costs forgiven.

If you smell or hear leaking gas:

- shut off machinery and remove all sources of ignition, including lit cigarettes, cell phones, power tools and equipment
- move workers upwind if possible
- call FortisBC immediately at **1-800-663-9911**
- never try to make temporary repairs yourself
- do not backfill over damaged pipe
- never bend a pipe to fix a break

Stop work if:

- a pipe has been struck, jarred or pulled
- you detect a rupture
- the tracer wire or pipe wrapping is damaged
- you discover natural gas pipes while working on another utility emergency; call FortisBC immediately at **1-800-663-9911**

Report suspicious activity

If you see any suspicious or unusual activity within a right of way, please contact FortisBC and let us know, so we can take the appropriate actions. In an emergency, or if you see an act in progress, call **911** or your local police.

The information provided on this sheet should be used as a guide only. All natural gas piping and appliance installations should meet manufacturer's instructions and all applicable codes, standards and regulations.

BC One Call

Toll free: **1-800-474-6886**

Cell: ***6886** (on TELUS or Rogers mobility networks)

Online requests: bconecall.ca