



APRIL
SAFETY TALK
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Has your municipality had zero underground utility hits?

No? Unfortunately, you're not alone. A recent survey by municipalities shows that most municipalities have had unintentional contact with gas, electrical, telecommunications or municipal infrastructure.

Every municipality needs to assess their processes for identifying hidden underground hazards so proper ground disturbance practices can be followed to prevent utility hits.

April is proclaimed by many municipalities as "Safe Digging Month", to promote safe excavation practices among municipalities, contractors and homeowners.

Along with making the proclamation, municipalities need to look at their practices to be sure all staff are following safe ground disturbance practices.

Call before you dig, locate buried infrastructure, expose any conflicting buried facilities before using mechanical excavation equipment, and dig with care are all steps to be taken in safe excavation practices.

In addition, workers and supervisors should conduct an in-field risk assessment before each days' work, and after breaks. Changes can occur due to weather, vandalism, or other incidents that occur overnight.

All workers involved in excavations need to receive training in hazard recognition and how to control those hazards. All supervisors need to perform regular inspections of the worksites to ensure workers are following all established safe practices, and to correct deficiencies where necessary.

Topic: Safe Digging Month

WHEREAS,

Each year the integrity of BC's underground infrastructure is jeopardized by damage during ground disturbance activities by those who fail to Call Before You Dig; and

WHEREAS,

The consequences of damage to buried facilities can include service disruptions, environmental contamination, property damage, personal injury and even death; and

WHEREAS,

The BC Common Ground Alliance and the BC Municipal Safety Association and its members promote the principles of Damage Prevention Best Practices, including the need to Call Before You Dig; and

WHEREAS,

Ground disturbers, including contractors, municipal workers, homeowners and landowners can save time and money and keep our province safe and connected by following Damage Prevention Best Practices including making that one simple call to BC One-Call; and

WHEREAS,

The stakeholders in the buried facility damage prevention process – the digging community, buried facility owners/operators, buried facility locators, regulatory agencies, training organizations and the one-call centre – all agree that the prevention of damage to buried facilities is a shared responsibility.

NOW, THEREFORE,

I do hereby proclaim, on behalf of _____,
the month of April 2017 as **SAFE DIGGING MONTH** and encourage
all ground disturbers to always **Call Before You Dig**.