



THE excavator scoop

COURTESY OF YORK COUNTY NATURAL GAS AUTHORITY AND PATRIOTS ENERGY GROUP



Excavation Damage is the Leading Cause of Pipeline Accidents

... AND ACCIDENTS COME WITH A **COST** WHICH IS MORE THAN JUST FINES & FEES



The Damage Incident Reporting Tool Report, or DIRT for short, gathers data from different stakeholders in the utility and construction industries concerning utility line strikes and damage. The 2020 report analyzed 385,381 utility damage events and reported the following statistics:

DID YOU KNOW

According to the DIRT report, contractors and developers were responsible for damaging utilities a majority of the time

- Contractors/ developers were the excavators responsible for the majority of damage incidents.
- Telecommunications was the #1 type of facility damaged, followed by natural gas.
- The equipment responsible for the most damage incidents was a backhoe or trencher.
- The top two damage root causes were: (1) notification not made; (2) excavator digging prior to doing test holes/potholes.

Homeowners and workers should always have underground utility lines marked to avoid the outages, injuries and property damage that come with unintentionally striking a utility line.

In 2021, the Authority responded to 219 pipeline incidents caused by improper excavation.

While about a third of those incidents could have been avoided by calling SC811 first, the majority of incidents were caused by improper excavation practices within the marked tolerance zone.



Stay up to date on current and upcoming projects in our community by attending the York County UCC meetings held every other month around the county. Learn about new developments and technologies in the industry, and network with other contractors to develop strong working relationships.

UPCOMING UCC MEETINGS: APRIL 27 | JUNE 22

Get on the mailing list – contact Amy Cassidy at marketing@ycnga.com

DAMAGING UTILITIES COMES WITH A

COST

WORKERS BEWARE

Damage to a utility line can result in significant injuries and even death. Natural gas travels from the wellhead to consumers at varying pressures. The higher the pressure of gas in a pipeline, the more dangerous an accident with that pipeline could be. Contact with a power line or with natural gas could result in burns, electrocution, and other injuries resulting in a painful recovery with extended therapy at great cost.



COST TO CONTRACTOR

Injuries and accidental deaths can not only take a serious toll on construction projects, but they can completely destroy good companies. Beyond the tragedy of injuries from a utility line accident, there are direct and indirect costs for the employer of the worker. These include medical costs, worker's compensation, liability lawsuits and the replacement of expensive equipment. Other indirect costs include productivity and efficiency of the crew, costs incurred by delays, along with the fines or fees to repair and replace the damaged utility.



IN THE TRENCHES

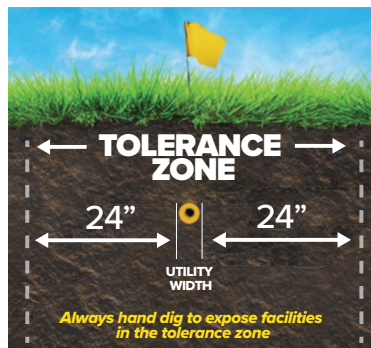
Take Action to Avoid Incidents

Trenching and excavation work presents serious hazards to workers. Pre-planning is important. No matter how many trenching, shoring, and backfilling jobs an employer has done in the past, it is important to approach each new job with care and preparation.

STEP 1 : SHOULD BE TO NOTIFY SC811 OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND HAVE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES LOCATED.

How can employers avoid hitting underground utility lines and pipes during excavation work?

- 1) Call 811, the "Call Before You Dig" number, to establish the location of any underground utility installations in the work area.
- 2) Educate subcontractors and direct employees on setting up and following through with a locate ticket.
- 3) Use Positive Response to verify that all utilities have been marked.



- 4) Dig carefully adhering to the tolerance zone. Hand dig areas within the zone to uncover utilities before proceeding.
- 5) Ensure that while the excavation is open, underground installations are protected, supported or removed as necessary to safeguard workers.
- 6) Call us to help! We have a team of locators that are ready to stand watch while your excavation takes place.

THE **COSTS** ADD UP QUICKLY

LINE STRIKE:

Recently in Rock Hill a contractor engaging in directional drilling for telecommunications struck a 2-inch steel gas pipeline. The line break called for 2-feet of replacement pipe along with other fittings. Thirteen employees and a contracting crew were on site for five hours repairing the line.

RISKS:

Besides the obvious risks to the directional drilling operator and the gas employees suited up to repair the line, the resulting break could also lead to fire, explosion or migrating gas into neighboring buildings.

COSTS:

For labor, materials and released (lost) gas, the costs of this incident exceeded \$16,600.



WE'LL SPOT YOU!

If your excavation is near a high pressure gas line

Before beginning work, call in a locate request to SC811. A YCNGA locator will mark the gas line and close the ticket with a code 55 (gas watch required), if the proposed area of excavation is within 6' of a high pressure pipeline.

The locator will then call the contact listed on the 811 ticket to schedule a time to meet and further define the scope of the work. Once the excavation is scheduled, the YCNGA representative will be on-site for the entire time the work takes place.

High pressure gas lines can be identified by the bullet style marker placed in the vicinity of the gas line. The marker does not indicate the exact location or depth of the pipeline, but should be a warning that gas lines are present. Always call in a request to SC811 to have underground facilities marked.



DID YOU KNOW

The life of a locate request begins three (3) working days after the request has processed, and expires after 15 working days. If the work will take longer, an update locate request should be called in at least 3 full working days prior to the expiration of the initial notice.



The UNSEEN Dangers of Migrating Gas

Striking a gas line has certain obvious dangers, but there is another danger to leaking gas that might not be visible to the naked eye. Gas may migrate underground for long distances and enter buildings or become trapped by concrete, asphalt, or even a layer of frost. In this way, it can enter sewer systems, electrical or communications conduits and travel long distances, eventually entering structures far from the strike zone.

Avoid parking company vehicles over electric or sewer manholes where migrating gas may have accumulated. The vehicles could easily provide an ignition source, endangering responders or employees working on repairs.

EVACUATION MAY BE NEEDED

When gas is escaping from a broken pipe, buildings in the area may need to be evacuated. This is the responsibility of the excavator, according to the SC Underground Facility Damage Prevention Act. If you have damaged a gas line and suspect leaking gas may be entering or migrating into a building, take immediate action to evacuate the occupants and call 9-1-1. Your prompt action may save lives or prevent serious injury or property damage. DO NOT leave a potentially hazardous situation to chance.



Excavator Education Program Resources

SC811 provides resources and training opportunities to both homeowners and professional excavators

SC811 ONLINE TRAINING web based program for training on-the-go

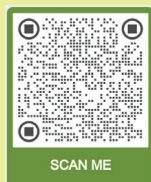
There are several courses which encompass most aspects of the Underground Facility Damage Act, Safety, and SC811 Education. Each course has a variety of modules that pertain specifically to that course.

ONLINE TRAINING SEGMENTS INCLUDE FOCUSED TOPICS FOR:

New Members	Fiber Installers
Landscapers	First Responders
Fencing Contractors	Home Builder Associations
Plumbers	Subaqueous & Off-Land Locates

SC811 ALSO OFFERS **FREE** PRINTED RESOURCES INCLUDING:

Excavator Quick Reference Guide
Homeowner's Brochure
Excavator Manual



<https://sc811.com/education-outreach/online-training/>

IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO KNOW

York County Natural Gas Authority	24/7 Phone Line	866 - 201 - 1001
York County Natural Gas Authority	Non-Emergency	803 - 323 - 5304
Patriots Energy Group	24/7 Phone Line	888 - 609 - 9858
Chester County Natural Gas Authority	24/7 Phone Line	803 - 385 - 3157
Lancaster County Natural Gas Authority	24/7 Phone Line	803 - 285 - 2045

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION - USEFUL LINKS

York County Natural Gas Authority	www.ycnga.com
Patriots Energy Group	www.patriotsenergy.com
Chester County Natural Gas Authority	www.chestergas.com
Lancaster County Natural Gas Authority	www.lcngasc.com
USDOT Pipeline Safety	primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/Excavators.htm
SC811	www.sc811.com
National Pipeline Mapping System	www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov

WAYS TO CONTACT SC811



Use the SC811 Portal to submit a locate request. Visit www.sc811.com and click the button, "Request a Locate". Locate requests are processed the same day, if submitted before 5pm. **'Chat Now'** submit questions to one of our support specialists



Call 8-1-1 within the state of South Carolina or **888-721-7877** from a mobile phone in York County or outside South Carolina.



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