

Dig Safe FAQs

Answers to your digging questions



What is a locate?

Locates are colour-coded ground markings identifying the approximate position of underground lines and cables on your property. They are made using temporary paint or flags. Locates are always accompanied by a locate sheet that maps out where lines are buried in relation to fixed objects, such as poles, sidewalks or driveways.



When do I need to call for a locate?

Any time you are digging on your property, a locate is required. Even small projects such as adding a garden or planting a tree require a locate. It's free and it's the law.

Who do I contact to request a locate?

To get a free locate, contact Ontario One Call by visiting OntarioOneCall.ca or calling 1-800-400-2255.

Which utilities need to be marked?

Ontario One Call will notify all owners of buried infrastructure in your area on your behalf. These include but are not limited to: electric, water, sewage and Enbridge Gas, as well as telecommunication companies.

What does it cost to get a locate?

Utility locates are a free service. There's no cost to you. Any privately owned infrastructure, such as a gas line that runs from your meter to your pool heater or barbecue, will not be covered under the Ontario One Call request. You'll need to hire a private locate company to mark these lines and there is a charge for this service.

How far in advance do I need to call for a locate?

A utility locate request must be made no less than five business days prior to the planned start date of your project. You must have locates marked prior to starting work—it's the law.

RESPECT THE MARKS

Knowing where underground utilities are buried can keep you, your family and your community safe. To help, we've rounded up the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about safe digging.



If I'm hiring a contractor, who's responsible for arranging a locate?

Your contractor should contact Ontario One Call before they start digging on your property. However, we recommend checking with your contractor beforehand to ensure they have obtained the required locates.



What information do I need to provide when I call?

You'll need to provide Ontario One Call with your name and address, the date work is expected to begin, the type of project being completed, how you plan to dig (shovel, excavator, etc.) and how deep you plan to dig.

FAQ Get the answers to your digging questions

Will private natural gas lines be marked as part of the free locate service?

Any privately owned infrastructure, such as a gas line that runs from your meter to your pool heater or barbecue, will not be covered under the Ontario One Call request. You'll need to hire a private locate company to mark these lines and there is a charge for this service.



What happens after I request a locate?

A qualified utility representative will visit your property and mark the location of all underground cables and pipes. They do this by painting or inserting flags in the ground along the path of the pipe or cable. They'll also provide accompanying paperwork and locate sketches for you and/or your contractor.

How will I know when all locates are complete?

You can check the status of your request on the Ontario One Call web portal. Owners of buried infrastructure will mark the status of their lines as either "clear" or "complete." A clear status means there is no risk and that your proposed digging area is safe. A complete status means the locate has been marked on your property. All utilities must be marked as either clear or complete to proceed.

How close to a locate flag can I dig?

The actual location of the buried line may be within one metre on either side of the paint or locate flags placed on your property. This is referred to as the tolerance zone. When digging in the tolerance zone, you must first dig using hand tools (such as a shovel or a spade) to expose any hidden pipes before using machinery.

How long is a locate valid for?

An Enbridge Gas locate is valid for 60 days from the date that the locate was completed. If you have not finished digging within those 60 days, a new locate is required.

What happens if flags are moved or paint is removed?

Moving or removing locates makes them invalid and you'll be liable for any damage that occurs on your property. You must call Ontario One Call to arrange a new locate before you or your contractor start digging.



How do I know if I've damaged a natural gas line?

If you smell rotten eggs, hear an unusual hissing sound, or see dust or leaves blowing in a localized area, you may have damaged a line. You may also see a physical puncture or gouge on the line.

What should I do if I hit a natural gas line?

If you think you've hit a natural gas line, stop work immediately and shut off all equipment to avoid ignition. Do not attempt to control the release of gas yourself. Move a safe distance away from the area (e.g., a neighbour's house), call 911 and contact Enbridge Gas immediately by calling 1-866-763-5427.

Learn more safe digging tips
enbridgegas.com/digsafe