

When marking lines, follow the industry color code, using appropriate colors for the services you're marking.

Red	Electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables
Yellow	Gas, oil, steam, petroleum and gaseous materials
Orange	Communications, alarm and signal lines, cables or conduit
Blue	Potable water
Green	Sewers and drain lines
Purple	Reclaimed water, irrigation and slurry lines
Pink	Survey markings
White	Proposed excavation

Q: What do I do if an underground line on my property is hit?

A: If an underground utility line is damaged, immediately notify the affected utility. If you are concerned about safety, call 911 or the fire department. You are required to file an Incident Report with the MPUC any time an underground facility is hit or when you observe a violation of the Dig Safe® rule. For an Incident Report form, call the MPUC at (207) 287-3831 or (800) 452-4699, or visit www.maine.gov/mpuc/dig_safe/index.html.

The Maine PUC takes an active enforcement role in Dig Safe® Law compliance and the consequences for non-compliance are severe. Negligence or non-compliance with Dig Safe® rules may result in fines that could reach \$5,000 or more.

Dig Safe in Maine



Maine Public Utilities Commission
18 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0018
(207) 287-3831 / (800) 452-4699
www.maine.gov/mpuc



Dig Safe® System, Inc.
1-888-DIGSAFE (1-888-344-7233) OR 811
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Dig Safe in Maine

Property Owners Fact Sheet

Get The "Full Scoop" Before You Dig.



Maine
Public Utilities
Commission
Revised in 2010

Property Owners: This fact sheet provides important information to supplement the Dig Safe® brochure. It is only part of the story. To ensure your safety, please review the “Dig Safe® in Maine” brochure, available for free from the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC).

Q: I’m a property owner, not a professional excavator. Why should I care about Dig Safe®?

A: Careless digging, drilling and landscaping cause disruption of utility services, personal injury and environmental damage. In addition, as a property owner, you may own some or all of the underground utilities on your land. As a result, you would/may be responsible if someone is digging on your property, and damage occurs. So whether you’re doing it yourself, or hiring a professional excavator, before you start your project, make sure you fully understand Maine’s laws (Title 23 §3360-A) and MPUC rules (Chapter 895) for safe digging.

Q: What is Dig Safe®?

A: Dig Safe® is an organization created to promote public safety and avoid costly damage to underground utility lines by providing a call system to help identify where these lines are located. When informed of a planned excavation, Dig Safe® notifies its member utilities to mark underground lines they own or maintain. To contact Dig Safe®, call 1-888-DIGSAFE or 811, or you may visit their website at www.digsafe.com.

Q: When do I need to call Dig Safe®? Isn’t it just big digging projects that matter?

A: No. You’re required to call Dig Safe® whenever you’re planning a digging project — large or small — that disturbs the ground in any way using a mechanical method. A mechanical method means any equipment or tool that is powered by a motor. Examples of these projects include:

- Installing mailboxes or clotheslines
- Major landscaping projects or building additions
- Planting trees or shrubs
- Installing swimming pools
- Rebuilding walls or driveways
- Installing sewer lines, septic systems or drains



Q: How far in advance should I call?

A: First, pre-mark the boundaries of your planned excavation with white paint, flags or stakes. Add your initials or those of your excavator to the pre-mark so locators know they are at the right site. Then call 1-888-DIGSAFE or 811 at least three business days — but no more than 30 calendar days — before digging. Many utilities such as local water and sewer services own or maintain underground lines on your property but are not members of the Dig Safe® system. You need to call these “non-member” utilities because they will not be notified by Dig Safe®. All of these utilities, including small local utilities, must, upon request, mark their lines for you.

Q: How do I pre-mark an area for excavation during the winter?

A: During winter months, pre-mark the boundaries of your planned excavation with flags or stakes.

Q: If I hire someone to dig on my property, am I still responsible for calling Dig Safe® and “non-member” utilities?

A: If you have hired excavators, check with them to be sure they have called Dig Safe® and “non-member” utilities. If you are acting as the excavator, you must make the calls. To obtain contact information for “non-member” utilities, call 1-888-OKTODIG, or visit the website at www.oktodig.com.

Q: I am hand digging on my property. Do I still need to call Dig Safe®?

A: You don’t have to, since Dig Safe® rules only cover mechanical excavation, but it’s still a good idea to call Dig Safe®. Some lines may be located close to the surface and can easily be damaged by hand digging. This is especially true of cable TV, phone and electric lines. Even for hand digging, call Dig Safe®. If you hit a line, even by hand digging, you can still injure yourself, cause service interruptions, and be held responsible by utility companies for damaging underground lines.

Q: How do I know if I own underground utilities on my property, and what difference does it make?

A: Many people own some of the underground lines serving their property. Call the individual utilities (electricity, natural gas, telephone, cable TV, water and sewer) serving you to find out if you do. If you own any lines, and someone is excavating on your property, you must mark the location of the lines you own. Utility company crews only mark the location of lines they own or maintain. You must also mark underground facilities like water supply lines running between a private well and a home, home septic system lines, and electric/other lines serving outdoor lighting or other buildings on the property.

Q: How do I know where the lines I own are located? And how do I mark them?

A: You can locate them yourself, or you can try to hire someone to do it. If you want to do it yourself, first find out where the lines are located. Find out where they enter your house around your foundation, or, if you do not have a foundation, where they surface near your house. Then, if your proposed excavation involves digging near the street, find out where the utilities have marked their services in or near the street. Often, the lines run directly between the two points, but because this is not always true, you must identify the paths of lines you own across your property.

To figure out exactly where the lines run, either hand dig test holes, rent a utility locating device or hire a utility locating service. For a list of locating services, visit the MPUC website at www.maine.gov/mpuc/dig_safe/index.html. It may not be practical to hire a utility locating service for non-metallic water and septic system lines. You may want to ask your builder, developer, well driller, or municipal plumbing inspector for information about where these lines were built. Finally, you may want to seek the advice or assistance of an excavator for help locating lines you own.