



Damage Prevention Guidance for Municipal Operations and Maintenance Activities

The following provides guidance for routine municipal operations and maintenance activities potentially resulting in construction, ground disturbance or vehicle crossings within the vicinity of an NEB-regulated pipeline. Each ground disturbance, construction activity or vehicle crossing is unique and this guidance cannot deal with all cases. Its purpose is to help determine whether a municipality must notify the pipeline company for a safety assessment prior to commencing a municipal operations or maintenance activity using the one-call centre, or the pipeline company directly in the Northwest Territories. Where the situation is unclear, or municipal staff are unsure whether the pipeline company is to be notified, always opt for the increased communication and contact the one-call centre at clickbeforeyoudig.com to place a locate request. **Where this guidance conflicts with the *National Energy Board Act (NEB Act)* or *Damage Prevention Regulations – Authorizations (DPR-A)*, and / or *Damage Prevention Regulations – Obligations of Pipeline Companies*, or any Order made under the NEB Act or Regulations, the NEB Act, Regulations or Order shall prevail.**

Ground Disturbance

If the activity is a ground disturbance (as defined in the NEB Act), among other requirements, the Regulations require contacting the one-call centre to request a locate, which triggers the damage prevention process. Ground disturbance is defined as any activity within the prescribed area¹ that involves:

- agricultural cultivation to depths of 45 cm or more, below the surface of the ground; or
- the soil otherwise being disturbed or displaced to a depth of 30 cm or more, or resulting in a reduction of the earth cover over the pipeline.

It may not be possible to determine the original depth of earth cover provided at the time the pipeline was constructed. For guidance purposes, if the activity results in the reduction of the current depth of earth cover over the pipeline, it is a ground disturbance.

Scope Change

If the scope of an activity near a pipeline changes from being less than 30 cm deep to 30 cm deep or greater, work shall stop and the pipeline company must be contacted to perform a safety assessment of the activity.

¹ The prescribed area means a strip of land measured 30 m perpendicularly on each side from the centreline of a pipe.

Controls

Municipal staff should consider putting controls in place in situations where they are required to use stakes or pins, such as marking the 30 cm point on the stake or pin to visually confirm that it is not driven into the ground 30 cm or deeper. An example of where stakes or pins are used is the placement of building forms for concrete sidewalk replacements.

Vehicle Crossings

Prior to driving municipal vehicles across a pipeline in a location that is off of a public highway or road, municipal staff must contact the pipeline company to provide a list of vehicle classes and associated axle weights of the vehicles that are planned to be used to cross the pipeline. The pipeline company will use that information to develop a vehicle management plan for municipal vehicles crossing the pipeline. The vehicle management plan should be reviewed by municipal and pipeline company staff on a regular basis. Where there are frequent crossings, the municipality and the pipeline company could consider long term vehicle pathways.

If soil conditions are such that the vehicle could leave ruts, municipal staff should consider different approaches to accessing the job site. Rutting of 30 cm or greater constitutes a ground disturbance and could impact the personal safety of staff or damage the pipe or its coating. Municipal staff must contact the pipeline company for a safety assessment if these soil conditions exist.

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Activity	Applicable Regulatory Category ¹					Regulatory Guidance	Factors ² (1-6)	Action Required by Municipality	Action Required by Pipeline Company
	Construction DPR-A s.7	Ground Disturbance DPR-A s.10	Ground Disturbance Facility Maintenance DPR-A s.11	Vehicle Crossing DPR-A s.12	Use of Vehicles & Mobile Equipment NEB Act s.112(2)(b)				
Maintenance activities < 30 cm deep, such as: Adjusting valves, valve boxes, manholes Sidewalk panel replacement, curb removal Saw-cut < 30 cm Road-milling and patching < 30 cm (large or small project) Planting < 30 cm Sign posts < 30 cm deep	No	No	No	No	No	Authorized under the NEB Act.	NA	Notify those contracted of their responsibilities under the DPR-A. If ground disturbance will be greater than 30 cm, must contact the one-call centre at least 3 days before the activity.	Acknowledge the one-call centre contact. Expedite the locate and safety assessment if work unexpectedly becomes a ground disturbance.

¹ Regulatory Category Legend:

- No – The specific section of the Act or regulations is not triggered by this activity.
- Yes – The specific section of the Act or regulations applies to this activity.
- Depends – The specific section of the Act or regulations may apply to this activity, depending on the details of the planned work.

² Factors to be considered when conducting operations or maintenance activities in a pipeline right of way:

1. Proximity to pipeline
2. Depth of the activity
3. Equipment used for the activity (axle weight, vibration)
4. Single activity or project (comprising several ground disturbances and determines planning factor and notice required)
5. Ground/soil conditions
6. Physical barrier between the activity and pipeline (house, fence)

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Underground infrastructure maintenance activities and installation > 30 cm deep such as: Streetlight base replacement, replacement and repair of water / sewer infrastructure > 30 cm deep Saw-cut > 30 cm Road-milling and patching > 30 cm	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Locate and safety assessment from the pipeline company required. (DPR-A s.11)	Cut - 1, 2 Mill – 1,2,3	Contact the one-call centre at least 3 days before the activity.	Respond with a locate and safety assessment within 3 business days. Locate form, safety assessment or clearance required. (DPR-A s.11)
Filling pothole < 30 cm	No	No	No	No	No	Authorized under the NEB Act.	NA	NA	NA

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Vehicle Crossing off public highway or road, non-agriculture (e.g. grass cutting ditches, paths or trails over pipeline)	No	No	No	Yes	No	Safety assessment and written consent from the pipeline company required. (DPR-A s.12)	3 - 6	Provide list of vehicle classes and associated axle weights planned to be used to cross the pipeline. Inform staff that if soil conditions are such that the vehicle could leave ruts to consider different approaches to accessing the job site. Rutting >30 cm constitutes a ground disturbance and could impact the personal safety of staff. Municipal staff must contact the pipeline company if these conditions exist.	Develop and provide a vehicle management plan to determine what vehicle classes, types and weights require authorization. Take-away for the future – Consider long-term vehicle paths to be built to accommodate a vehicle in frequently accessed areas.

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Street tree planting (Hand dug or tree spade) NOTE: Not considered to be infrastructure or the construction of a facility	No	Yes	No	Depends	Depends	Locate, safety assessment and written consent from the pipeline company required; very unlikely that a tree is planted at less than 30cm depth. Tree spade vehicle may be 'crossing' pipeline if it leaves public road.	1-6	Contact the one-call centre at least 3 days before the activity.	Respond with a locate and safety assessment within 3 business days. Locate form, safety assessment or clearance serves as written consent.

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Ditch cleaning (any depth) with mechanical equipment	No	Depends	Depends	Depends	Depends	Locate, safety assessment and written consent from the pipeline company required. May not necessarily result in a ground disturbance, but for safety considerations, a precautionary approach is used.	1 - 6	Contact the one-call centre at least 3 days before the activity.	Respond with a locate and safety assessment within 3 business days. Locate form, safety assessment or clearance serves as written consent.

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Installing new sign post > 30 cm NOTE: Depending on the size of the sign, could be considered as a facility.	Depends	Yes	No	Depends	Depends	Locate, safety assessment and written consent from the pipeline company required. Sign installation vehicle may be 'crossing' pipeline if it leaves public highway or road.	1 – 3, 6	Contact the one-call centre at least 3 days before the activity.	Respond with a locate and safety assessment within 3 business days. Locate form, safety assessment or clearance serves as written consent.

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Re-install or replace existing sign > 30 cm (e.g. sign knocked down)	No	Yes	Depends	Depends	Depends	<p>Locate, safety assessment required and written consent from the pipeline company required; hand-digging will usually be required unless post-hole is perfectly preserved.</p> <p>Sign installation vehicle may be 'crossing' pipeline if it leaves public highway or road.</p>	1 - 6	Contact the one-call centre at least 3 days before the activity.	<p>Respond with a locate and safety assessment within 3 business days.</p> <p>Locate form, safety assessment or clearance serves as written consent.</p>

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Safety-critical sign re-install or replace > 30 cm (e.g. stop sign)	No	Yes	Depends	Depends	Depends	<p>Locate, safety assessment and written consent from the pipeline company required and DPR-A s.3(3) "Emergency" is triggered.</p> <p>Safety assessment and written consent from the pipeline company required; hand-digging will usually be required unless post-hole is perfectly preserved.</p>	1-3,5,6	<p>Call the one-call centre ASAP before activity and place an Emergency locate request.</p> <p>NOTE: Emergency locate requests must be phoned in to the one-call centre. The phone number can be found on the home page of your provincial one-call centre's website which can be accessed through www.clickbeforeyoudig.com</p>	<p>Respond with a locate and safety assessment ASAP.</p> <p>Locate form, safety assessment or clearance serves as written consent.</p>

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Street light wiring - Pulling wire through pre-existing conduit	No	No	No	No	No	Authorized under the NEB Act.	NA	NA	NA
Grading gravel roads / shoulders	No	No	No	No	No	Authorized under the NEB Act.	2,3,6	NA	NA
Culvert / catch basin / sewer cleaning or sediment removal	No	No	No	No	No	Authorized under the NEB Act.	NA	NA	NA

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