

CHAPTER VI ONE-CALL DAMAGE PREVENTION PROGRAM



ONE-CALL SYSTEMS

A one-call notification system provides a telephonic communication link between excavators and operators of underground pipeline and facilities. The heart of the system is an operational center whose main function is to transfer information from excavators about their intended excavation activities to the operators of underground pipelines and facilities participating in the system. Excavators have to make only a single call to an operational center to start the process, thus the name “one-call.” Upon receipt of the information, operators of pipelines and facilities that could be affected by the excavation activity arrange for the timely identification and marking of underground facilities that are in the vicinity of the intended activity. When necessary the underground operators inspect the site being excavated and advise the excavator of the need for special measures to protect buried or exposed facilities. One-call notification systems may perform various other functions relevant to protecting underground pipelines and facilities from damage, such as record keeping and public awareness programs.

It is required that LP Gas operators be members of and participate in a qualified one-call damage prevention system. It is recommended that LP operators check with their state one-call systems to determine the laws and regulations that would apply to them.

EXCAVATION

Excavation activities must not be conducted without first ascertaining the location of all underground facilities which could be affected by the excavation.

Excavation activities include excavation, blasting, boring, tunneling, backfilling, the removal of aboveground structures by either explosive or mechanical means and other earth moving operations.

Prior to any excavation, each excavator must serve notice of intent to excavate to the One-Call Center serving the area in which the proposed excavation will occur. Notice must be given to the local One-Call Center in accordance with state regulations in advance of excavation. This requirement may vary from 24 – 72 hours excluding weekends and holidays.

EMERGENCY EXCAVATION

An emergency excavation is an excavation performed to eliminate an imminent danger to life, health or property. Telephonic notice of the emergency excavation must be given as soon as possible to the One-Call Center. If necessary, emergency assistance should be requested from each operator to locate and protect its underground facilities.

PRECAUTIONS TO AVOID DAMAGE

Each person responsible for an excavation activity must:

- Plan the excavation to avoid damage to underground facilities in and near the construction area.
- Perform excavations with procedures and equipment that shall ensure the facility does not sustain damage.
- Provide support for underground facilities in and near the construction area during excavation and backfilling operations to protect the facility.
- Dig test pits as necessary to determine the actual location of LP gas facilities if these facilities or utilities are to be exposed or crossed.

REPAIR OF EXCAVATION DAMAGE

Each person responsible for excavation operations which results in damage to an underground facility must, immediately upon discovery of the damage, notify the operator of the facility of the location and nature of the damage. The operator must be given reasonable time to make the necessary repairs before the excavation or backfilling in the immediate area of damage is continued.

Each person responsible for an excavation activity that damages an underground facility and permits the escape of any flammable or toxic gas shall, immediately upon discovery of the damage, analyze the situation to determine if anyone is in immediate danger and then take necessary action to protect that person. Remember, the one providing the assistance must not perform any actions which would endanger himself. If all people are out of immediate danger, then the person must notify the operator, local police and the local fire department. Then take any actions necessary to protect persons, first, and then property from possible further danger and to minimize the hazards until arrival of the operator personnel or police and fire department personnel.

Partial exemption is granted to operators of pipeline systems, other than municipal systems, where the primary responsibility of the operator does not include the transportation of LP gas.

An example of a partial exemption is an operator of a master meter LP gas system. An operator with this partial exemption does not need a written damage prevention program nor is a current list of local excavators necessary. It is not necessary for the partially exempted operator to notify the public in the vicinity of the excavation nor the local excavators of an operator's damage prevention program. But this operator must still be involved in the One-Call Center program in all other aspects.