



TEXAS PIPELINE DAMAGE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Railroad Commission of Texas ★ Safety Division

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) For Excavators

1. What are the parameters of the protocols listed in §18.3(d)?

Response: The Safety Division interprets §18.3(d) of Chapter 18, Title 16 Texas Administrative Code as follows:

- 1) The interval between each notice refers to the time allotted for the marking of the facilities. For example, if an operator and excavator agree to an interval of 7 days, the excavator must contact the notification center every 7 days to ensure that the marks are properly refreshed.
- 2) The scope of the ticket refers to the area being excavated and specifically the description of the project provided on the ticket.
- 3) The life of a ticket refers to the length of time a ticket will remain "open" or valid. For example, for a large project requiring several months to complete, the operator and excavator may agree upon a specific time period, such as 90 days.
- 4) The schedule of excavation work refers to the manner and the timing of excavation activities.

2. If damages occur to yard lines or pipelines not owned by the operator (customer owned) do those damages need to be reported?

Response: Yes, the damages would need to be reported to the Commission through TDRF and to the owner of the damaged pipeline.

3. If the excavator makes an additional call to the Notification Center because the excavator did not receive a positive response to the initial request for a locate, what is the time frame for reporting such action to the Railroad Commission of Texas?

Response: The excavator is required to submit a TDRF within 10 days whether or not a positive response was received from the pipeline operator. (§18.11(c))

4. Will exceptions be made for right-of-way (ROW) encroachments by landowners who damage pipeline facilities? For example, landowners, such as ranchers, and farmers who routinely work on the pipeline's ROW without calling for locates.

Response: No, both professional excavators and those non-professionals, such as landowners, homeowners, or other people not routinely involved in excavation activities, are required to comply with this rule.

5. Will the Railroad Commission be hosting educational seminars?

Response: Yes, details will be posted on the RRC website as they become available.

6. Will operators and excavators be able to take a safety-training course to reduce an administrative penalty?

Response: Safety-training courses approved by the Commission may be an option for both the underground facility operator and the excavator as determined by the RRC in accordance with §18.12(e).

7. Will there be a process for disputing alleged violations?

Response: Yes, alleged violation notices will be sent to the affected party allowing them to respond prior to any enforcement action being initiated.

8. Will an excavator, who chooses to contest a violation be required to travel to Austin, or may an excavator contest a violation at a local Commission office?

Response: Initially all hearings will be held in Austin.

9. Will excavators or operators be able to postpone appearing for a contested violation so as to combine several violations into one trip to the Commission?

Response: Yes; at the discretion of the Commission after reviewing the details of ease case.

10. Will the TDR system track actual individuals, companies, or both?

Response: Both

11. Is information from the TDR system available to the public?

Response: All of the information reported through the TDR system is open records and will be available to everyone.

