

Frequently Asked Questions: Excavations

What are my regulatory obligations as an excavator?

Section 9 of [Ontario Regulation 210/01](#) states, “no person shall dig, bore, trench, grade, excavate or break ground with mechanical equipment or explosives without first ascertaining from the licence holder the location of any pipeline that may be interfered with.”

Section 10 of Ontario Regulation 210/01 states, “No person shall interfere with or damage any pipeline without authority to do so.”

Generally, this means that for an Ontarian to engage in a “ground disturbance” activities like digging, boring, trenching or excavating, the person should obtain a “locate form” from a locator. The person engaging in ground disturbance will be asked to provide information describing the location where the work will take place, the expected time when the work will begin, the scope of the work, the nature of the work, the expected duration and depth of excavation, the name, address and telephone number of the Excavator, and the name of the Excavator’s site representative.

What is a locate?

A locate is information provided by the locator in the form of ground surface markings and underground infrastructure location documentation such as drawings, mapping, numeric descriptions, or other written documentation.

A locator is a person authorized by the owner of the underground infrastructure to perform a locate and issue a locate form to the excavator.” While there are other entities providing locate service, in general, this refers to the Ontario One Call in our province.

Locators use electromagnetic fields, signals, or other acceptable industry best practice methods, together with the information provided by the owner of the underground infrastructure, to identify the location of that underground infrastructure.

What is Ontario One Call and how do I contact them?

Ontario One Call is a not-for-profit organization that facilitates excavation locate requests to ensure homeowners, excavators and infrastructure owners are safe when digging. Ontario One Call notifies infrastructure owners (members) of excavation requests. These members then deliver locates, minimizing the risk of infrastructure damage, loss of utilities, injury, and monetary consequences. You can contact Ontario One Call via telephone at 1-800-400-2255 or visit their [web site](#).

What should I do if I accidentally struck a pipeline or witnessed a pipeline strike?

If you have accidentally struck a pipeline or witnessed a pipeline strike, please call Spills Action Center (SAC) to report the incident. The number is 1-866-MOE-TIPS (663-8477). During your call with the SAC, you will be asked the following information:

- Date and time of the incident
- Source and/or location of the incident
- Current status of the incident
- Type of pollutant involved
- What impact the pollutant is having on the environment
- Weather conditions (for example, precipitation, temperature, wind direction, etc.)

This reporting process provides locations for TSSA to follow up with excavators to improve safety, reduce the number of damages to pipelines and ensure stakeholders understand the regulatory requirements and excavation best practices. The information helps the provincial government and TSSA identify and track environmental issues, identify trends and develop best practices.

For more information, please visit [TSSA's website](#).