



## Dig Safely on the Farm

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It is important to use the One-Call Service before starting any project on the farm where ground will be broken, regardless of depth. This applies to all small or large projects such as sod removal for a garden, fencing projects, digging a new well, or putting in a foundation. The One-Call service is free of charge and it only takes a few minutes to submit a utility locate request. Although many underground infrastructures and utilities are found in urban areas, rural areas also have a number of these services.

Privately owned utilities are the responsibility of the customer. (Examples of this include water lines from a private well, and power lines to a garage or shed past the meter.) Utility owners do not know the location of these lines. However, the One-Call service will be able to refer a private contractor that can help locate these utilities.

Buried utilities can be just beneath the surface and digging prematurely can put you in harm's way or cause major damage to a utility line. A property owner or contractor who damages a utility may be charged for repairs. As they say...know what's below.

Some of the typical buried utilities that could be in your work area are:

- Electrical lines
- Gas, oil, or petroleum pipes
- Communications, fiberoptic, and cable lines (or conduits)
- Water pipes
- Sewer pipes
- Survey markers

A utility locate request is made by visiting [ClickBeforeYouDig.com](http://ClickBeforeYouDig.com) and following the instructions on the website. Select the province in which your project is located, take note of the "Advance Notice" and "Days Valid" information, then identify if the locate



request is for a homeowner or contractor. You will then be directed to your provincial One-Call site. You may need to set up an account with a login and password if you have not used the service before. Follow the instructions to submit your utility locate request. There is also a live chat option (and phone numbers) available on most sites for any help you may need.

If you receive confirmation that the area is all clear of buried utilities, you can start digging.

If the work area does have buried utilities, you will need to identify the work area before the utility locate personnel come to mark out the location of buried utilities. Your work area needs to be clearly identified and it is recommended to use white spray paint. It usually takes 3-5 days for utility owners to mark the buried utilities.

Once the utilities are marked out, be sure to respect the marks and follow instructions from the utility owners. You will need to dig by hand within one metre of any buried utility.

You can remove any flags or markers once you have completed all digging in your work area.

Please note that a new locate request will need to be completed for a larger project where you need to dig 30 days after the original locate request and for each new project.

Remember, better safe than sorry. No matter the project and no matter the location, take the time to contact the One-Call service. Digging safely will ensure your safety and prevent costly utility repairs and interruption of utility services.

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) is a public campaign held annually during the third week of March that focuses on the importance of safe agriculture. The 2021 campaign, Safe & Strong Farms: Lead an AgSafe Canada, takes place March 14-20.

CASW is presented by Farm Credit Canada. For more information, visit [agsafetyweek.ca](http://agsafetyweek.ca).

