

Re: Underground Electrical Contact

Ontario sees more than **3,900 underground infrastructure damages each year** — about 17 every workday. In one ESA investigation, a contractor performing directional boring struck underground electrical infrastructure, triggering an explosion that blew a transformer cover across a nearby roadway and forced an immediate shutdown of the job site. ESA's investigation found the contractor had valid [Ontario One Call](#) locates for public infrastructure. **However, the customer-owned underground electrical infrastructure that was struck had not been identified.**

Ontario One Call locates stop at the ownership demarcation point. When digging on private property, additional private locates may be required to identify customer-owned underground electrical infrastructure.



An ESA case involved a directional bore operation at a small plaza

If You're Called to Repair After an Underground Strike

As an LEC, your role often begins after an incident has already occurred. Before proceeding with repair work:

- Confirm the **incident has been reported to ESA** within 48 hours (**OESC Rule 2-007**)
- Ensure the **site is safe and de-energized** before starting work
- Verify that all **required notifications and permits are in place**
- **Assess the damage to affected underground infrastructure**, not just the visible point of contact
- Use **approved connectors and methods** for underground repairs (**OESC Rule 12-112**)
 - See Bulletin [12-2-*](#) (*Underground cable installations and cables for submarine use*) for more information on underground repairs

Before and During Work

- **Confirm all locates before excavation or repair work begins**
 - [Ontario One Call](#) locates apply to public infrastructure
 - Customer-owned/private infrastructure requires a separate private locate
- **Ensure underground markings are visible and match the active work area**
- **Stop work if locate information is incomplete or unclear**

Report and Learn More

- **Report electrical incidents to ESA:** [ESAsafe.com/electrical-products/report-product-safety-concern/](https://www.esasafe.com/electrical-products/report-product-safety-concern/)
- **Review ESA Bulletin 2-14-***: [ESAsafe.com/Bulletins](https://www.esasafe.com/Bulletins)
- **Learn more about Ontario One Call and private locates:** [Ontarioonecall.ca](https://www.ontarioonecall.ca)