

Damage to underground conductors during excavation- customer owned services

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) continues to receive reports of incidents where excavation, directional boring or augering activity has damaged underground conductors and risked worker safety.

Local Distribution Companies (LDC's) identify their underground electrical wiring only as requested by excavators. Excavators may be unaware that not all underground electrical services are being identified.

Warning

Electrical underground cables that belong to the property owner are not included in the LDC locate,

Before digging, boring, trenching, excavating, breaking ground with tools, mechanical equipment or explosives, the contractor, owner or occupant of the land, building or premises shall request and obtain all locates prior to commencement of the excavation. This will also include hand digging applications.



The Occupational Health and Safety Act Ont. Reg. 213/91-Construction Section 228(1) states that:

Before an excavation is begun;

- a) the employer excavating shall ensure that all gas, electrical and other services in and near the area to be excavated are located and marked;

- b) the employer and worker locating and marking the services described in clause (a) shall ensure that they are accurately located and marked; and
- c) if a service may pose a hazard, the service shall be shut off and disconnected.

Privately owned underground services

Prior to excavating, the excavator must be aware of privately owned underground services, such as underground supply cables from LDC owned equipment, to the electrical meter or service panel, supply to garages or shops located past the electrical meter, pools, sheds and driveway lighting to name a few which may exist on the boulevard (public right-of-way) or customer property. It is the responsibility of the private facility owner to locate their underground services, which may involve the facility owner hiring a private locator.

LDC owned underground services

LDC's have a legal responsibility to locate all **LDC owned** underground services up to the ownership demarcation point upon excavator request through Ontario One Call (www.on1call.com). Depending on the LDC and the installation, the ownership of underground conductors will vary from site to site across Ontario. Depending on ownership of the underground facility, underground service conductors located on the boulevard or customer property may or may not be included in the locate.