



**30** YEARS OF  
SAFETY  
EXCELLENCE  
**WORKSAFELY** MHCA

BEFORE YOU  
PUT A SHOVEL  
IN THE GROUND,  
FIND OUT WHAT'S  
HIDDEN BELOW –

## IT'S THE LAW

**T**he smell, sights and sounds of spring get us all thinking about those backyard projects – the deck, the landscaping, maybe an addition to the house – that have been put off too long.

But before the shovel goes in the ground, the first stop for all homeowners and contractors should be the website that puts you in touch with those who know what's hidden below.

It's not just good safety advice, it's the law.

Every year, about \$1 billion in damage is done across Canada to underground utilities – buried telephone or gas lines, for example – and homeowners and contractors play a role in this.

At [clickbeforeyoudigmb.com](http://clickbeforeyoudigmb.com), anyone who is thinking of digging, no matter how small the job, can request a "locate" for these utilities.

If you do not request a locate before digging, you might dig into a buried utility line. You can cause an outage to an essential utility service, and potentially create a life-threatening situation. You can be fined.

Even if you have used the service before and you think you know where the lines are, you need to request a locate before every digging project to protect yourself. Remember, it is a free service.

If you do incur damage, report it immediately to the appropriate utility owner or contact Click Before You Dig Manitoba at 1-800-940-3447.

**SAFE DIGGING MEANS PAYING ATTENTION TO THE JOB, FOLLOWING THE RULES AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, CONTACTING CLICK BEFORE YOU DIG MANITOBA PRIOR TO ANY EXCAVATION, TO GET UNDERGROUND UTILITIES LOCATED AND MARKED.**

The Manitoba Common Ground Alliance (MCGA) has designated April as Dig Safe Month, to raise awareness of safe-digging practices across the province safety and to reduce damages to underground infrastructure.

"It serves as a reminder to contractors and homeowners that they need to contact utilities before they start digging," said Jackie Jones, Vice-chair of the MCGA.

Safe digging means paying attention to the job, following the rules and most importantly, contacting Click Before You Dig Manitoba prior to any excavation, to get underground utilities located and marked.

"Nearly all of the essential services provided to residences and business in Manitoba can be located underground, including electric, gas, water, sewer and communications," said Jones. "Before digging, even by hand, play it safe and contact Click Before You Dig Manitoba.

"Damaging underground utilities can be costly, inconvenient to those whose services are interrupted and potentially harmful to the excavator and public. So, make sure you take a minute to click before you dig."

The Click Before You Dig Manitoba web portal connects contractors and homeowners with their One-Call Centre, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of their intent to dig. Professional locators are sent to the dig site to locate and mark underground lines with flags, spray paint or both. Requests can be made online at [www.clickbeforeyoudigmb.com](http://www.clickbeforeyoudigmb.com), or by phone at 1.800.940.3447. It is available 24/7 service 365 days a year. Requests should be made a minimum of 3 full business days before the planned excavation.

"It really is the only way to 'Know What's Below,'" said Chris Van Kats, Chairman of MCGA.

Installing a mailbox, putting in a fence, building a deck and laying a patio are all examples of digging projects that need a call to utilities before starting.

The depth of utility lines can vary for a number of reasons, including erosion, previous digging projects and uneven surfaces. Utility lines need to be properly marked because of the risk of striking an underground utility line exists even when digging only a few inches.

"Damage to vital utility services by excavation equipment results in hundreds of interruptions each year," said Robert Morrison, Damage Prevention Coordinator for Manitoba Hydro.

Though some are minor and fixed quickly, others, require fire and police personnel to evacuate nearby buildings and block roads until it is safe.

"It's essential homeowners and contractors plan their projects safely and know what's below before a shovel touches the ground," Morrison stressed. "A few extra minutes reviewing safe excavation guidelines can go a long way in helping reduce damages, ensuring every excavation site is a safe one." ❧

Visit [ClickBeforeYouDigMB.com](http://ClickBeforeYouDigMB.com) or [www.DigSafeCanada.ca](http://www.DigSafeCanada.ca) for more information.

**99%** of the time,  
damage to buried utilities  
is avoided when a locate  
request is made to a  
one-call centre

**79%**  
of damages cause a  
service disruption

Each year, damage to  
underground infrastructure  
costs Canadians  
**\$1 Billion**

KNOW WHAT'S  
BELOW.

[ClickBeforeYouDig.com](http://ClickBeforeYouDig.com)



**KNOW  
WHAT'S  
BELOW**

**WE ALL WIN WHEN BURIED  
UTILITIES ARE MARKED BEFORE A DIG.**

**HERE'S WHAT YOU  
CAN DO TO HELP**

- Call or click to contact the right agency for a "locate" before beginning any outdoor digging project, large or small
- If a neighbour is planning a digging project, remind them to contact utilities for locates before they break the ground
- If you do incur damage, report it immediately to the appropriate utility owner, or call 1-800-940-3447

