

Fall Harvest

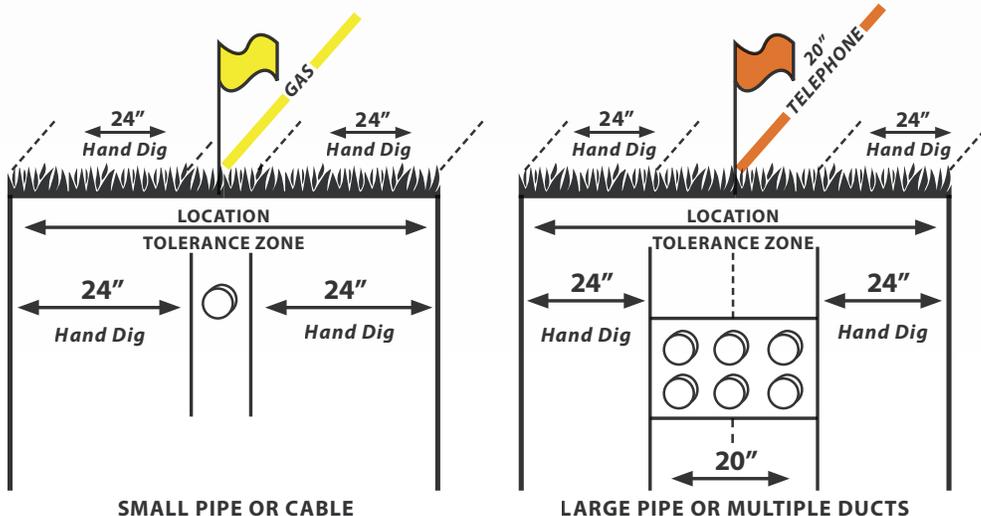
By: Lareina Taing

If you're a farmer, fall crop harvesting is an annual occurrence. With over 26 million acres of farm land¹ and over 70,000 miles of underground pipeline in Minnesota², it's nearly inevitable that underground pipelines will run through or near farm land. Due to erosion, frost, root system growth, and other factors, utility lines can move in depth and location. They can be buried just a few inches below the surface, so even small excavating projects can result in damages. Exercise caution and prevent damages by always following the safe digging process for all agricultural excavations.



Protect yourself, others, and your valuable property by following these safe excavating steps³ when harvesting at a depth of 18 inches or more:

1. When excavating on a farm or in other agricultural settings, it is important to contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC) 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, before you begin work. GSOC will communicate your excavation information to the affected utility operators who will locate their underground utilities in the proposed area.
2. Always check the status of the underground utility markings before beginning work. Did you know that it's easy to check the status of your ticket before you excavate? Just visit www.gsocsearch.org, click on the green button to your left, and look for your ticket in "Search and Status".
3. Respect the marks. Do your best to maintain the paint lines and flags left by locators. Stop excavating and contact GSOC to request a re-mark if you can no longer see the marks because they are obscured or destroyed by weather or other interferences.
4. Employ proper excavation techniques. Known as the Tolerance Zone, "excavators are required to maintain a minimum horizontal (side to side) clearance of two feet (24") between an unexposed facility and the cutting edge or point of any power operated excavating or earthmoving equipment". "Hand dig in the Tolerance Zone to maintain the integrity of underground facilities. See graphic.



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According to a recent DIRT Report by the

Common Ground Alliance (CGA), 66% of underground utility damages that homeowners and farmers experienced were due to not contacting a one call center before excavating. Don't become a statistic. Stay safe and "call or click" before you begin harvesting this year!

*Remember to locate underground lines you may own such as farm taps and geothermal loops. The location of these lines are not marked by the utility companies.

¹ Source: 2012, Census of Agriculture conducted by United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Click [here](#) for more details.

² Source: Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety. Click [here](#) for more details.

³ Source: Call 811 website. Click [here](#) for more details.

⁴ Source: 2016 GSOC Handbook. Click [here](#) for more details.



Customer Support
(651)681-7326

To File a Locate Request:



Twin Cities Metro 651-454-0002
Greater MN Area 800-252-1166
Emergency 866-640-3637
Or you can go online at www.gopherstateonecall.org



www.facebook.com/gopherstateonecall



www.twitter.com/gopheronecall

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