

Did You Know...

GROUND DISTURBANCE SAFETY TIPS

Ground disturbance is any activity that disturbs/displaces the earth and reduces the cover over a buried facility. Ground disturbance includes construction, excavation, trenching, plowing, drilling, blasting, grading, etc.

It can pose hazards to workers and the environment if it damages or exposes underground infrastructure, pipelines, or chemicals. Ground disturbance should only be done by trained and competent workers who must follow proper procedures including contacting the local one-call center or submitting an online request to locate any buried facilities before digging.

1. **Review the Work Area.** Ensure that a thorough site assessment/walk through is conducted prior to calling for locates. Mark out the areas requiring ground disturbance so there is a clear visual of the work area.
2. **Call Before You Dig.** Buried facilities must always be located and marked (flags, stakes, paint or other materials) before ground disturbance begins. Plan accordingly to ensure you have enough time for this task to be completed and be mindful that these locates typically expire within 30 days.
3. **Hand expose.** Locates are not always accurate; flags and other markers don't always indicate exactly where the buried facility is. Due to this, any work near a marked utility should be hand exposed so that its location and alignment can be confirmed. Some common methods to expose the utilities are, using hand tools, shovels, and hydrovac.
4. **Have an Emergency Response Plan.** Older utilities, or incorrect markings can happen. Make sure there is an emergency response plan in place, and workers are aware of the process to ensure a timely and efficient response.



At Black & McDonald, Nobody Gets Hurt, Today or Tomorrow!