



Toolbox Talk

Volume 17: Report Your Damages & Do Not Tamper!

Topic: Reporting damages and proper steps to take when dealing with an excavation damage.

Underlying Rules: 16-345-4(f)(1) & (2): When contact is made or damage is done to any underground facility of a public utility, the excavator shall immediately notify the affected utility company and shall not tamper with or attempt to repair said facility except when authorized by the public utility. If the damage poses a danger such as blowing natural gas or sparking electricity, the contractor must call 911 first.

Scenario: The gas company was called to a location for an odor of gas. The responding technician discovered gas migrating underground and gas accumulating in the adjacent building. The gas company crew excavated and discovered that the end of a 4" plastic main had been sheared off and someone attempted to repair it by installing a Fernco fitting. The unauthorized field repair was insufficient and leaking. The investigation discovered that a contractor had been excavating to install footings for a new staircase to a building when they damaged the gas main. The contractor did not have a CBYD ticket and the gas main was not marked. The contractor did not call the gas company or 911 but attempted to repair the gas main themselves. The damage was reported to PURA and the contractor was required to take an education course on Call Before You Dig in Connecticut.



Damage location. No markings existed as no CBYD ticket was called in.



Attempted repair done by the contractor. The contractor capped the main and then use hose clamps to keep the cap in place.

What should have been done?

The contractor should have notified CBYD and obtained a ticket before using a backhoe to excavate for the footings. Having the line marked out would have avoided this scenario. If the contractor still came in contact with the gas main then they should have shut down their equipment, cleared the immediate area and called 911. The contractor should have then contacted the gas company to notify them of the damage.

Lessons Learned:

- You must call CBYD no matter where you are excavating. The contractor did not think there would be a gas main behind this building, but a call to CBYD would have alerted him to its location.
- It is the contractor's responsibility to notify 911 if a utility damage has resulted in a gas leak, electrical short circuit or other event endangering the public. The contractor must also directly notify the public utility of the damage.
- A contractor should NEVER attempt to repair a damaged gas facility. Entering a hole with leaking gas could cause ignition of the gas, leading to serious burns. Leaking gas in a trench also displaces oxygen, leading to possible asphyxiation.
- Unauthorized repairs to gas facilities can have disastrous repercussions. Gas leaking into this structure could have led to an explosion, putting the lives of people in the building at risk.

Crew Sign-in		Training Conducted by: _____		Date: _____	
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CBYD Toolbox Talks are designed as quick training tools for use by excavator's safety or management personnel to have brief but meaningful discussions about safe excavation practices. These talks are based on real incidents that have occurred in Connecticut or significant incidents elsewhere in the country.