

# New York Safe Excavation Checklist

Use this checklist as your step-by-step guide to help prevent dangerous and costly damage to underground natural gas pipelines and other utilities.

*Always contact your state 811 center before digging and for the most current requirements.*

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ 811 ticket number: \_\_\_\_\_

Job number: \_\_\_\_\_ NYC Dept. of Buildings permit number: \_\_\_\_\_  
(For Metro New York only)

Site location: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. State law requires you to call 811 or make an online request** for utility locates *at least two full working days* before any excavation starts, excluding the date of your call, weekends and legal holidays. At no cost to you, the 811 center will notify member underground facility owners in the immediate area, so the location of pipelines and other facilities can be marked prior to excavation. Allow more time for long, involved projects.
  - Upstate New York: **Call 811** or **1-800-962-7962** | **UDigNY.org**
  - Downstate New York – Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Long Island and the Rockaways: **Call 811** or **1-800-272-4480** | **newyork-811.com**
- 2. Notify facility owners** who are not members of your local 811 center about your excavation and request locates directly from them. (Oil and gas production and gathering pipeline systems used primarily to collect oil or gas from wells are not required to join the New York 811 centers.)
- 3. Before notifying 811, pre-mark your dig area** with white paint, flags or stakes, so locators can more easily identify and mark affected utilities. Document your markings with photos or video.
- 4. Retain your ticket number** and related documentation. Keep this proof of compliance handy at the job site in case of emergency.
- 5. If digging in New York City and its five boroughs: The NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) requires you to provide your 811 ticket number when making normal notification of the commencement of earthwork.** The ticket must address all street frontages associated with the excavation, and all documents related to the notification must be kept on-site and available upon request. To complete the DOB earthwork notification, call 1-212-393-2550.
- 6. If your 811 locate indicates you will be working within 15 feet of a high-pressure natural gas transmission pipeline or other critical utility:** Prior to digging, you are required to attend an on-site meeting and/or have contact with qualified National Grid representatives to help reduce the risk of excavation-related damage. National Grid **MUST** be on-site during the excavation.
- 7. Expect a response from every facility operator** confirming the absence or presence of utility lines in your work area. Document the responses. If you do not get a response, do not dig; call 811.
- 8. Check the site on your planned excavation date** to confirm that your entire requested dig area has been located and marked. Look for aboveground signs of utilities that have not been marked, such as meters, pipeline markers, valves, etc. Also check for signs of something buried after the locate was completed, such as a fresh trench. If you find unmarked facilities, stop digging and notify 811 and the facility operator. Never assume an unmarked utility line is abandoned. Always assume lines are in use and present a potential danger.
- 9. Begin excavation within 10 full working days of your locate request.**  
If your excavation will be delayed, contact 811 to request a re-mark.

**Smell Gas. Act Fast. Be the one to call 911.**



Know what's below.  
**811** before you dig.

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- 10. Maintain the marks.** You are responsible for maintaining locate marks until your excavation is complete. Document marks with photos or video before you dig. If marks fade or are destroyed, call 811 to request a new ticket so the area can be located and marked again. Stop work until the relocates are done.
- 11. Respect the tolerance zone.** Do not use mechanical excavation equipment within the “tolerance zone,” which spans the width of a marked utility plus 24 inches from each indicated outside edge. For your safety, use ONLY hand tools or vacuum technology within this zone.
- 12. Visually verify the location and depth of a marked utility line** by carefully digging test holes with a blunt hand tool. When hand digging, approach from the side rather than the top, and do not use sharp probes. Be sure to find the actual facility, not just the tracer wire or warning tape.
- 13. Locate marks may not be accurate.** If you cannot visually verify the indicated line within the tolerance zone, stop work and notify the facility operator.
- 14. After visual verification,** you may not power dig closer than 4 inches in any direction from the designated or known outside diameter of the line unless the utility operator agrees to this in writing.
- 15. If you scrape the coating on a gas pipe or cut a tracer wire,** call National Grid and 811 immediately. Even apparently minor damage can cause the line to fail in the future or become unlocatable.
- 16. Once a natural gas pipeline has been exposed,** excavate around it with caution. Add support if necessary, using materials that will not damage the pipe or its coating. Backfill with care. Consult National Grid for specific backfill rules.
- 17. Use special care to protect cast iron pipelines** from damage. Notify National Grid whenever cast iron gas pipe is exposed or falls within an excavation trench’s angle of repose.
- 18. If you contact a natural gas pipeline and/or suspect a gas leak, assume there’s a danger – even if the damage appears minor.** Warn others, leave the area quickly and stay away until utility personnel say it is safe to return. Do NOT use matches, lighters, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes or vape pens) or anything electrical – not even a light switch, phone or garage door opener. A spark from any of these items could ignite leaking gas, causing a fire or explosion. Leave the excavation open and do not attempt to stop the flow of gas. From a safe location, call 911 and National Grid immediately. (Excavators are required by law to call 911 if gas is escaping.) In Downstate New York, also call **811** or **1-800-272-4480**. Report the incident to your supervisor.

To report emergencies, **call 911** and National Grid immediately.

## In case of gas emergencies:

### Long Island and the Rockaways:

911 and 1-800-490-0045

**Metro New York:** 911 and 1-718-643-4050

**Upstate New York:** 911 and 1-800-892-2345

## In case of electric emergencies:

**Upstate New York:** 911 and 1-800-867-5222

## Smell Gas. Act Fast. Be the one to call 911.

This is an important notice. Please have it translated.

Este é um aviso importante. Quiera mandá-lo traduzir.  
Este es un aviso importante. Sirvase mandarlo traducir.  
Avis important. Veuillez traduire immédiatement.  
Questa è un'informazione importante, si prega di tradurla.

Это очень важное сообщение. Пожалуйста, попросите чтобы вам его перевели.  
Đây là một thông báo quan trọng. Xin vui lòng dịch thông báo này.  
這是一個重要的通知。請翻譯一下。

هذا إخطار مهم، ترحى ترجمته.  
এটি একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বজ্রপতী অনুগ্রহ কর.  
এটি অনুবাদ করে ননি।  
Sa a se yon avi enpòtan. Tanpri, fè li tradwi.  
דאס איז א וויכטיקע אנהאט. ביטע איבערזעצט



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