



# Preventing Damage to Buried Utilities



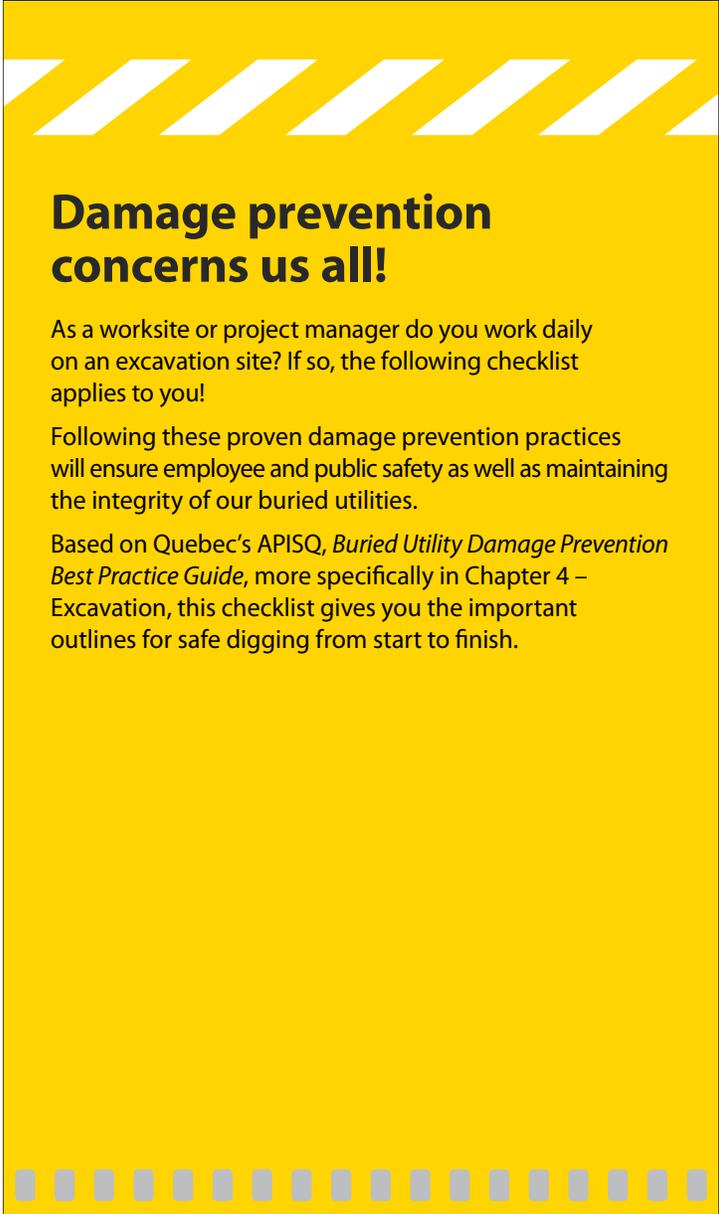
## Worksite and Project Managers

Excavation Checklist

**info**  
**excavation**  
[www.info-ex.com](http://www.info-ex.com)

**apisq**   
Alliance pour la protection  
des infrastructures souterraines  
du Québec

**CGA**  
Common Ground Alliance



## **Damage prevention concerns us all!**

As a worksite or project manager do you work daily on an excavation site? If so, the following checklist applies to you!

Following these proven damage prevention practices will ensure employee and public safety as well as maintaining the integrity of our buried utilities.

Based on Quebec's APISQ, *Buried Utility Damage Prevention Best Practice Guide*, more specifically in Chapter 4 – Excavation, this checklist gives you the important outlines for safe digging from start to finish.



## **Planning is the key!**

Every aspect of the excavation process, no matter if it's drilling, digging, blasting, grading, excavating or filling, is governed by laws and regulations, more particularly occupational health and safety requirements.

By following the ASPISQ's Best Practices, you will help prevent damage to buried utilities. A summary of important Best Practices is provided on the following pages.



# Before Excavating



## Locate Request

**Requesting, follow-up and update maintaining of a locate request is your responsibility.**

A locate request must be made to Info-Excavation a minimum of four work days prior to undertaking any excavation work. The ticket number provided by Info-Excavation confirms that your request has been processed.

A written report from the buried utility owner or operator will inform you whether there are buried utilities where work is scheduled. This report must be provided to employees and made readily available on the worksite.

The locate request is valid for a 30 day period from the date which the ticket number was received. If work is extended beyond the 30 day period, a new locate request must be made.

### **Attention!**



**For emergency excavation, a locate request must still be made to Info-Excavation, as well as to buried utilities owners or operators who are non-members, even if a demand for construction is not requested. Emergency locate request MUST be made by phone.**



## Pre-marking

**You are responsible for pre-marking the worksite.**

If the worksite is inexact or cannot be identified clearly in your locate request, you are responsible for pre-marking the worksite using, for example, white paint, flags or white stakes before the locator's arrival.

## Pre-excavation / Tailgate Meeting

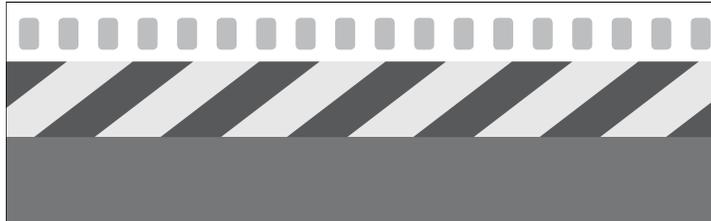
**If necessary, a pre-excavation or tailgate meeting on the worksite can be scheduled beforehand.**

A tailgate meeting gives you an opportunity to share information and coordinate the location of buried utilities and excavation work.

### **Attention!**

**A tailgate meeting is equally beneficial to discuss and plan for special excavation work, such as major or specialized excavation work.**





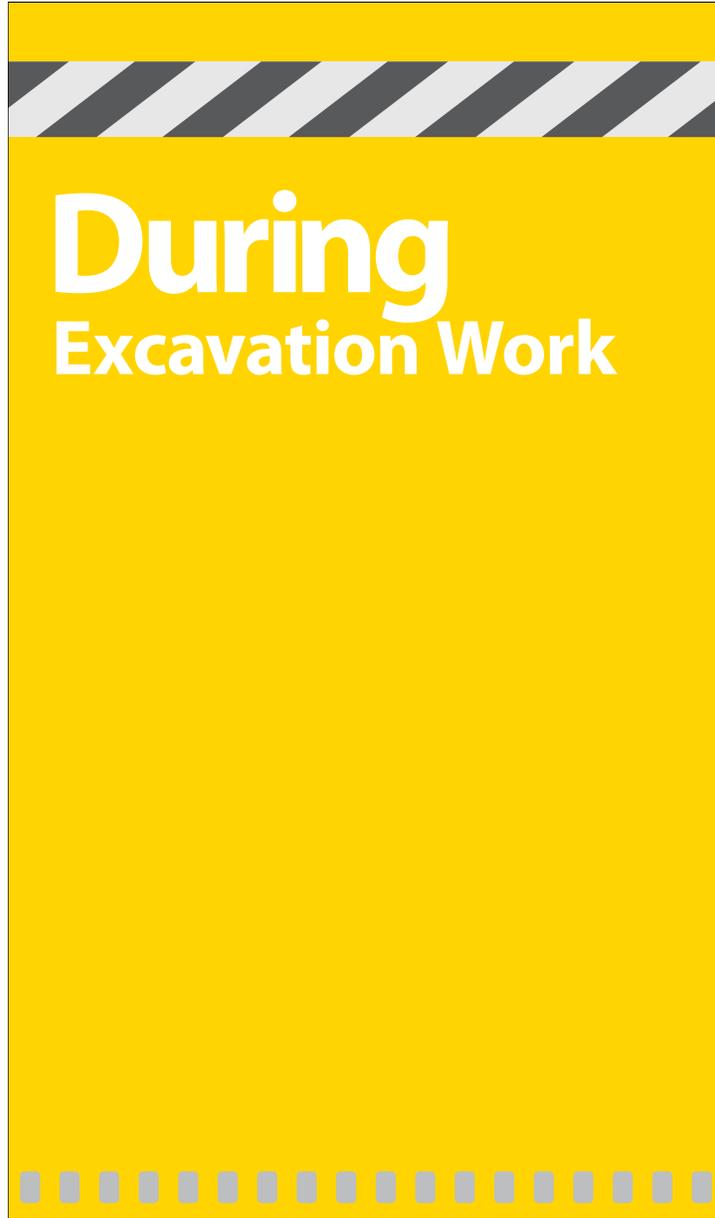
## **Emergency Contact Information**

**All worksite employees must have on hand  
all emergency contact information.**

**Attention!**

The following documents must be readily  
accessible at all times on the worksite:

- locate report;
- clearance;
- utility supporting methods;
- contact information.



**During  
Excavation Work**



## **Soft Excavation Methods**

**Soft excavation methods must be used when excavating in a buffer zone or in restricted or high risk areas (precise digging).**

Should precise digging be required, a soft excavation method, such as vacuum / hydrovac excavation is recommended.

For further information please view the APISQ's video, *The 3 Soft Excavation Methods*.



## Markings and Colour Codes

**Buried utilities must be marked in accordance with the Universal Colour Code.**

Markings must be visible at all times. During excavation, buried utilities must be re-marked to ensure proper location of buried utilities.

## Machine Equipment Operator

**A second worker or «spotter» must be present at all times to assist the machine equipment operator.**

This practice helps detect potential hazards. Workers must be trained beforehand to follow emergency measures.

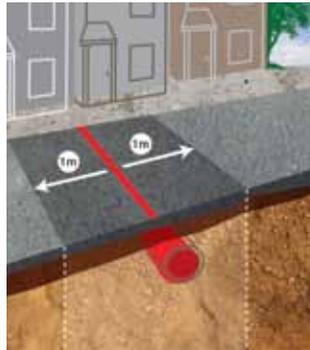




## Buffer Zone

**A buffer zone must be observed on each side of markings.**

Certain precautions, such as hand-exposure (hand-digging) or vacuum excavation, must be followed within the 1 metre buffer zone on either side of the utility markings.





## **Exposed Buried Utilities During Excavation**

**Workers must be given supporting methods while on worksite.**

Supporting exposed buried utilities during excavation is critical to maintaining their integrity and to worksite safety. Supporting methods must be certified by an engineer.

## **If you discover a previously unidentified buried utility, notify Info-Excavation**

**Info-Excavation must be advised of buried utilities that are not identified in the locate report.**



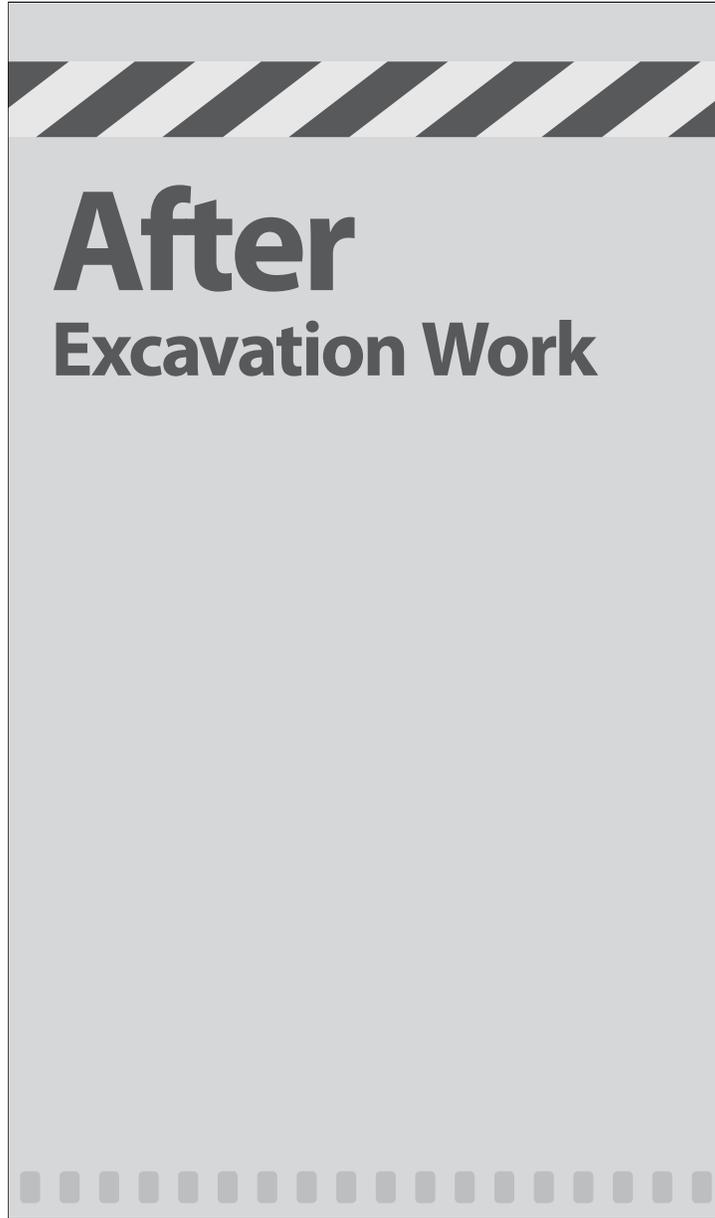


## **Contact with a buried utility**

**If you contact a buried utility during excavation, know what safety measures must be taken in an emergency (breakages, damages, accidents). Share this information with employees.**

**The following steps must be taken:**

- Stop all excavation work.
- Advise emergency services if you suspect a risk to public or worker safety (gas leak or damages to water main).
- Advise Info-Excavation, as well as buried utility owners or operators, if there is a breakage, leakage, gap, cut-out or dent done to their utility.



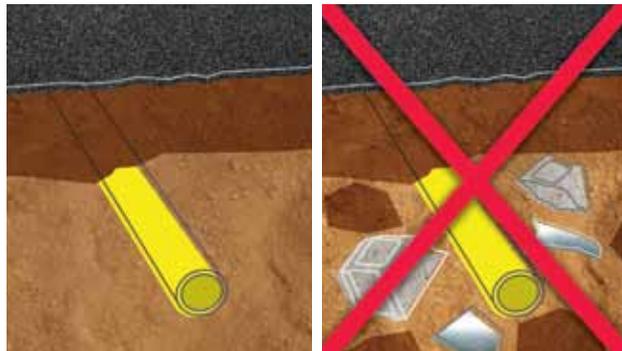
**After**  
**Excavation Work**



## Backfilling

**Ensure backfilling complies with buried utility owner / operator requirements.**

Care must be taken when backfilling a worksite. Do not use sharp objects, compacted or frozen soil. Do not bury trash or pipe ends. Backfilling methods are an integrated part of damage prevention to buried utilities.





### Verification Checklist

- 1** Locate request made  
Date and ticket number of request \_\_\_\_\_  
30 day request renewal  YES  NO  
Excavation Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 2** Pre-marking of worksite necessary  YES  NO
- 3** Date of on-site pre-excavating / tailgate meeting \_\_\_\_\_
- 4** Locate reports received from Info-Excavation\*
  - Gaz Métro  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Hydro-Québec  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Telecoms  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Other  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Other  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Non member of Info-Excavation \_\_\_\_\_
  - Other  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Other  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
  - Other  YES N° \_\_\_\_\_  NO
- 5** Soft excavating method used  YES  NO
- 6** Information available on worksite
  - Written Locate report  YES  NO
  - Important Emergency numbers  YES  NO
  - Supporting methods  YES  NO
  - Other work-related documents  YES  NO

\* A list of all members is available on Info-Excavation's Website at Info-ex.com





The ministère des Transports du Québec  
is a proud partner of the APISQ and Info-Excavation.



Thank you to our GOLD partners.





## Useful Information

### Info-Excavation

[www.info-ex.com](http://www.info-ex.com) 1 800 663-9228

### APISQ

[www.apisq-qcga.ca](http://www.apisq-qcga.ca)

Montreal area: 514 339 APISQ (339-2747)

Elsewhere in Quebec: 1 877 71APISQ (712-7477)

[info@apisq-qcga.ca](mailto:info@apisq-qcga.ca)

The *Buried Utility Damage Prevention Best Practice Guide* can be downloaded on the APISQ's Website.

## Colour Codes

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ELECTRICITY                 | TELECOMMUNICATIONS<br>CABLES<br>OPTICAL FIBER   |
| SURVEY                      | SEWERS  |
| WATER WORKS                 | STORM SEWER<br>NON DRINKING WATER<br>IRRIGATION |
| NATURAL GAS<br>HYDROCARBONS | PRE-MARKING                                     |

This document was produced by the Alliance pour la protection des infrastructures souterraines du Québec (APISQ), with the collaboration of its members.