

## If You Hit a Gas Line or Suspect a Gas Leak:

### DO



- Stop Work. Extinguish open flames. Promptly leave the premises.
- Instruct others to leave the premises immediately.
- Move to safety and call 9-1-1. Notify the local utility directly or via 8-1-1.
- Keep others at a safe distance.

### DO NOT

- Operate any electric appliances while in the premises.
- Operate any pipeline system equipment.
- Turn vehicles or equipment on or off.
- Use anything that might create a spark, such as a cell phone or matches without first leaving the area and arriving at a safe location.

#### If You Work for a Municipality or Authority:

- > Be watchful for cross bores in sewer mains. Use this brochure as a guide when clearing a blockage.
- > Do you see a utility crew working near sewer lines? Stop and discuss cross bores with them.
- > Keep copies of this brochure in your trucks to distribute to utility crews and plumbers.

#### TEMPORARY MARKING COLOR

WHITE	Proposed Excavation
PINK	Temporary Survey Markings
RED	Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit, Lighting Cables
YELLOW	Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum, Gaseous, Hazardous Materials
ORANGE	Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit
BLUE	Potable Water
GREEN	Sewers, Drain Lines
PURPLE	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation, Slurry Lines



Pennsylvania One Call System, Inc.  
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**Caution: Natural Gas and Electric Lines  
May Unintentionally Intersect Sewer Pipes**

**Safety Tips For Plumbers, Sewer Cleaners, and Drain Cleaners**

# CALL BEFORE YOU CLEAR

Do you know that cross bores  
are a hidden hazard?

**DON'T CROSS HIS PATH!**



# CROSS BORES

## DIAL 811

LEARN ABOUT CROSS BORE SAFETY HERE:

[www.pa1call.org/crossbore](http://www.pa1call.org/crossbore)

# CROSS BORES



A cross bore is defined as the intersection of an existing underground utility or underground structure by a second utility installed using trenchless technology. This results in an intersection of the utilities, compromising the integrity of either or both utility or underground structure.

In rare cases, a gas pipeline or other utility line may cross through a sewer pipe. If a plumber unknowingly strikes a gas or electric line while cutting through a sewer blockage, natural gas could enter the sewer system or electrocution may occur. We want to prevent this from happening.



When working with a sewer blockage outside the home, always suspect a cross bore. Consider these steps before, during and after clearing any sewer pipe:

1

## BEFORE Clearing:

- Call **811** (One Call) to have all utility line locations marked on the property. This may identify intersecting lines.

2

## AFTER Calling:

- Whenever possible, utilize an outside trap to clean out the sewer line.
- Look for trees or landscaping that could be causing an obstruction.
- Ask the resident if there has been any recent utility work in the area.
- Use an in-line camera inspection device as it will help in assessing the blockage.



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## DURING Clearing:

- Do not use a cutting tool. This applies when clearing both sewer laterals and drains.
- Use minimally invasive equipment such as a plumbing snake or water jet, to attempt to clear the blockage.
- Feel for obstructions that do not seem to resemble tree roots or other common obstructions as the tool moves through the sewer line.

CLEARING A SEWER BLOCKAGE COULD DAMAGE A GAS OR ELECTRIC LINE AND LEAD TO:



GAS LEAKS



FIRE



EXPLOSION



ELECTROCUTION

4

## AFTER Clearing:

Cutting tools are not recommended. However, if you have used one:

- Check the blades for inorganic material (plastic or metal) when it is withdrawn from the sewer line. Natural gas utility lines are typically made with plastic. Electric lines are covered in plastic.
- Watch for bubbles caused by natural gas escaping from the toilet or other entry point of the cutting tool.
- Inspect the area with a Combustible Gas Indicator (CGI) or other gas-detection equipment.

## Learn to Recognize Natural Gas Leaks

Natural gas leaks are rare, but they can happen. Your senses will alert you if a leak occurs.

**SIGHT** – Escaping gas affects the nutrients in soil, so discolored soil or dead vegetation near a pipeline may indicate a natural gas leak. Dirt or water blowing up from the ground may also indicate a leak.

**SOUND** – Natural gas leaks may make a hissing or a high-pitched whistling noise. Noises will vary based on the line pressure.

**SMELL** – A strong odor of natural gas can indicate unburned fuel in the air. Natural gas is odorless so a sulfur-based odorant is added to give it a rotten egg smell and warns of its presence. Be alert for this odorant.



**Call  
before you clear**

Call Pennsylvania 811 before clearing any sewer pipe. Utility companies will help identify nearby utility lines that may intersect.

**Dial 8-1-1 or 1-800-242-1776**