FACILITY OWNER | LOCATOR COMPLIANCE TRAINING

Reference Guide, August 2025

PA Act 287 of 1974, as amended by Act 127 of 2024

Pennsylvania Underground Utility Line Protection Law aka the One Call Law This guide has been prepared as an educational document for facility owners and locators taking the compliance test. The guide's intention is as a reference tool to explain in a general way the requirements provided by the law.

PENNSYLVANIA PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION (PUC) (COMMISSION)

Act 287 of 1974, as amended authorizes PUC to enforce provisions of the state's Underground Utility Line Protection Law, Act 287, also known as the "One Call Law." The PUC'S Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement has created a section called "PA One Call Enforcement". This section will consist of a supervisor and investigators. As a requirement of Act 287 all underground facility damages are to be documented and submitted to the PA One Call System via an alleged violation report found on the PUC website and the PA One Call System website.

The PUC representative on the Board of Directors of Pennsylvania One Call is the supervisor of the Gas Safety Section. Enforcement Staff Contact Information: www.puc.pa.gov/pipeline/pa-one-call

PENNSYLVANIA ONE CALL SYSTEM, INC.

Pennsylvania One Call System, Inc. *dba* Pennsylvania 811, POCS, PA One Call System, One Call

- Our purpose is to prevent damage to underground facilities. To promote safety, we provide an efficient and effective communications network among project owners, designers, excavators, and facility owners.
- Open every day of the year, 24 hours a day.
- Submit locate requests online at www.paonecall.org or by calling 811.

DAMAGE PREVENTION

Damage prevention is a shared responsibility. Communication among stakeholders is key to ensuring safety and protecting vital facilities. Free-flow communications and cooperation allows all parties to focus on the common goals for safety and damage prevention.

ONLINE RESOURCES

PA Act 287 of 1974, as amended
www.paonecall.org/palaw

User Guide
www.paonecall.org/userguide

Facility Owners Information
www.paonecall.org/facilityowners

Enforcement
www.paonecall.org/enforcement

THREE BUSINESS DAYS

- Excavators are obligated to notify not less than three nor more than ten business days in advance of beginning excavation or demolition work; unless the project is complex.
- Complex project notices require a ten-business day notice.
- A business day is any day except Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday prescribed by statute.
- A business day begins at 12:00:00 am and ends at 11:59:59 pm.

TICKET TYPES

- **Design:** any drawing that is prepared for an excavation requires a design notification that must comply with the provisions in Section 4 of the Act. Digging is not permitted on a design notification. Those planning work that disturbs the earth are required to notify Pennsylvania 811. There are two types of design notices: Final Design Notice and Preliminary Design Notice. Facility owners are required to provide information as to the position and type of lines at the work site based on the information currently in the facility owner's possession; or, to mark the plans, which have been provided by the designer by field location or by another method agreed to by the designer, excavator and facility owner, or its agent.
- **Emergency:** An emergency is defined by Section 1 of the Act. A sudden or unforeseen occurrence involving a clear and immediate danger to life, property or the environment, including, but not limited to serious breaks or defects in a facility owner's lines. Facility owners should respond as soon practicable following receipt of the notification from Pennsylvania 811. It is a violation of the law to provide a misrepresentation of an emergency excavation. This action is subject to an administrative penalty under section 7.10.
- **Update:** modifies the lawful start dates on an existing locate request due to work not starting, work stopped and is starting again, or work in progress when remarking is needed. The update ticket is a new ticket. In the remarks section on the ticket, it will reference the previous serial number.
- **Complex Project:** used to schedule a complex project preconstruction meeting request.
- **Routine (single) Locate Request:** notification for excavation work shall be made not less than 3 business days nor more than 10 business days prior to commencing excavation work starting the day the notification is received.
- **Demolition:** notification for demolition work shall be not less than 3 business days nor more than 10 business days prior to commencing demolition work starting the day the notification is received. Demolition work may require more advance clearance from a facility owner if their service lines need to be disconnected. This work may also need a permit for the work. The one call notification should not be considered notice under any circumstance other than the Act.

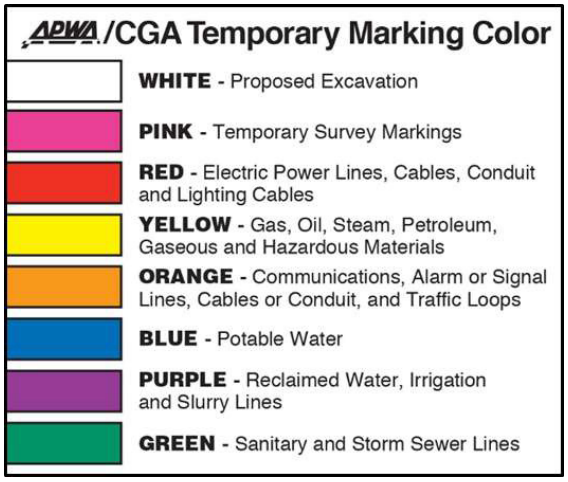
The excavator shall have the sole responsibility to submit each locate request to the One Call System. To not delegate the excavator's duty to submit a locate request to the One Call System to another person.

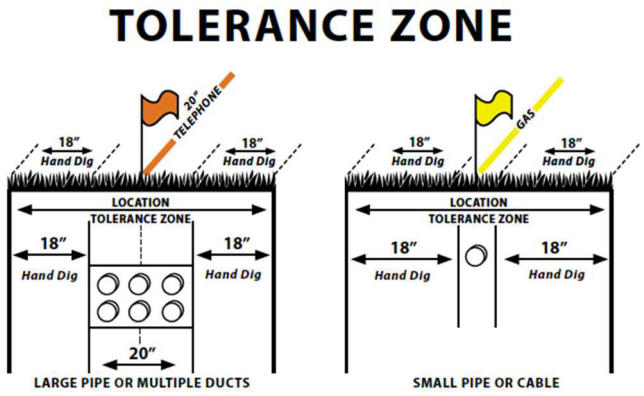
SINGLE LOCATE REQUEST VS COMPLEX PROJECT

- The maximum locate request size is 1,000 feet, or intersection to intersection, whichever is greater, along the same road, within the same political subdivision.
- A single project, or a series of repetitive, small, short-term projects that are related in scope, that impacts facilities over a long period of time or a large area. Duration, Impact, Size, Complexity (DISC)
- A project owner or an excavator can request a preconstruction meeting.
- A facility owner is required to attend and participate in preconstruction meetings and to work with excavators on a schedule to mark the underground lines reasonably in advance of the actual start of excavation or demolition work for each phase of the work.
- A facility owner can respond back through the KARL system to request a meeting with the excavator if they would like to talk about the complexity of a single locate request.

FOUR COMPONENTS OF A CORRECT MARK

- A facility owner responsibility is to mark, stake, locate or otherwise provide the position of the facility owner's underground lines at the work site within eighteen inches horizontally from the outside wall or edge of a line or facility.
- The four components are 1) use the appropriate color when marking underground lines; 2) identify the facility owners name or initials or use a flag with the company logo; 3) Mark the type of material the facility is made of; and, 4) Indicate the size of the line.
- Why are the components important to an excavator? 1) when using the appropriate color it identifies the type of facility the excavator will deal with underground; 2) knowing who the facility owner is beneficial when the excavator has a question or if something happens on site they can immediately contact; 3) if an excavator gets to the underground line, they can identify it is the facility owners line based on the material; 4) the size of the line is extremely important because that determines the tolerance zone for the excavator.
- A tolerance zone means the horizontal space within eighteen inches of the outside wall or edge of a line or facility.





LOCATING BEST PRACTICES

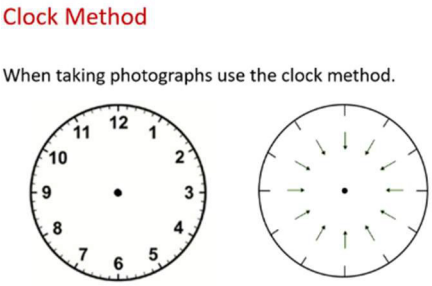
- Increase visibility with color-coded flags and/or stakes.
- Long locates should be indicated at intervals at no more than 50 feet.
- Changes in direction and lateral connections to the facility should be clearly marked.
- To identify the location of a known facility's point of connection to its facilities, where the point of connection is not owned or operated by the facility owner. A facility owner may identify the location of a known facility connected to its facilities, but not owned or operated by the facility owner, as a helpful guide to the excavator or property owner. The identification shall not be deemed to impose any liability upon the facility owner for the accuracy of the other facility's identification. This is referred to as the Good Samaritan clause.
- It is good practice to mark and protect all facilities in addition to the standard main or service lines; which may include the main valves, curb valve boxes on services, drip installation boxes, cathodic protection test station boxes.

LOCATING 101

- There are three ways to apply a signal: Conductive Method/Direct Connect, Inductive Clamp Method, and Inductive Method.
- The preferred method is the Conductive Method where you connect a signal directly to the cable or pipe you want to trace. This is most accurate method of cable locating. Connecting the transmitter directly isolates the signal to one cable or pipe.
- Corrective actions to use include improve the ground; use more effective settings or access points and successful locating methods or techniques.

DOCUMENTING THE WORK SITE

- A facility owner locator should always document what work was completed on a locate request. This assists the locate process by requiring a locator to review what was locate and then to verify that all facilities within the requested area were marked.
- Careful documentation helps ensure there is an accurate record of the work performed by the locator and helps eliminate confusion over the work was requested by the excavator.
- When taking photographs use the clock method.



SAFETY ON A WORK SITE

If you are concerned about an excavator who is uncooperative, you should notify the excavator's onsite supervisor, superintendent or project owner, and report any unsafe practices or request for support. If their behavior places the facilities at risk or you observe an immediate hazard, and your requests are ignored, you should notify 911 immediately.

KARL RESPONSE CODES

- A facility owner is required to respond to all notifications through the One Call System.
- The KARL system is set up to use by phone or online.
- Facility owners are required to give final response to close the communication with the excavator and designers.
- When a facility owner does not give a final response, it will register in the ticket record, as "999 did not respond through PA One Call"; which is a violation of the law.

KARL RESPONSES		
Excavation	**Design**	**Preconstruction Meeting**
001 Clear No facilities or facilities not invloved based on ticket information	**082 Design Conflict** Send Plans	**090 Will Attend Meeting**
002 Conflict Lines Nearby Direct Contact to follow by Facility Owner	**083 Engineering Complete**	**091 Clear** Will Not Attend Meeting
003 Field Marked		**092 Requests Meeting** Direct Contact to follow by Facility Owner
004 Insufficient Information Do Not Dig		**095 Did Not Attend Meeting** Direct Contact to follow by Facility Owner
005 Not Marked Due to No Access		**096 Agrees No Meeting Required**
006 Schedule Date and Time Lines Will Be Marked By		**099 Attended Meeting** Reached Agreement
007 Voice Message		
999 DID NOT RESPOND THROUGH PA ONE CALL		

THE DIRECT CONTACT RULE

- A renotify is a retransmit of an existing ticket to advise one or more facility owners of locate-related issues.
- When the excavator initially arrives at the work site, the excavator discovers an unmarked or incorrectly marked facility they will a) Call 811; b) Request to renotify the facility owner or facility owners.
- This is NOT a new ticket. The serial number does not change.
- The ticket will contain this statement: Direct contact with excavator required within two hours: YES
- The facility owner has two hours to make direct contact with the on-site person on the ticket by a) meet at the work site, b) communicate by telephone, or c) contact by using FaceTime or or other video conference methods.

RENOTIFY TICKET

- A renotify ticket, without the Direct Contact Rule, will contact this statement: Direct contact with excavator required within two hours: NO
- The facility owner should respond to the ticket based on their company policy.

ALLEGED VIOLATION REPORT

- The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) enforces PA Act 287 of 1974, as amended (the One Call law).
- Excavators, designers, project owners and facility owners are required by law to submit an alleged violation report to the Commission through the One Call System A person by action or inaction fails to fulfill their obligation of the Act.
- Excavator, project owner, designer, and facility owner has not more than 30 business days to file an alleged violation report.

ALLEGED VIOLATION REPORTING

	Excavator	Project Owner	Designer	Facility Owner
Not more than 30 days	*X*	*X*	X	X