



NYC Emergency Management Infrastructure Preparedness Bulletin Excavation Safety Alert

About the Excavation Safety Alert

Contractors are required to dig safely at all times to protect underground critical facilities by following requirements outlined in the **Protection of Underground Facilities Act** (16 NYCRR Part 753), also known as Code 753. Under New York State law, contractors are required to “Call Before You Dig” through New York 811 (**1-800-272-4480** or **811**).

During periods of extreme temperatures or high system demands, the continuity of underground critical facilities that supply electric, gas, steam, water, and telecommunications becomes vital to maintaining a high level of public safety and quality of life. Based on weather conditions, the City will issue an **Excavation Safety Alert** to heighten awareness of safe excavation practices and provide additional guidance to contractors that is above and beyond what is outlined in Code 753 for facilities that are deemed critical.

If an **Excavation Safety Alert** is issued, contractors are strongly encouraged to implement the enhanced protective measures listed below for critical facilities, such as primary electric feeders, oil filled electric facilities, gas transmission mains, stream transmission mains, and telecommunications switching stations.

Suggested Actions During an Excavation Safety Alert

Enhanced Protective Actions

- Cease all activity involving excavation within eight feet from the outside edge of the facility trench to the marked critical facilities.
- Excavation activity may resume around critical facilities only if the contractor digs by hand and uncovers the critical facility. Once the location and extent of the critical facility is visually confirmed, excavation may resume utilizing powered equipment to within four feet of the edge of the critical facility.
- Other restricted activities in the presence of critical facilities include, but are not limited to, backfilling and tamping and installing piping under critical facility crossings. When these activities are necessitated by schedule or work area restrictions/stipulations, the contractor may proceed with extreme caution.
- Utilize an excavator observer or “pit man” to assist the equipment operator when operating excavation equipment

General Protective Activities

- Call Before You Dig: New York 811 (**1-800-272-4480** or **811**)
- Wait the required time
- Confirm utility response
- Respect the markings
- **Dig with care:** take all reasonable steps necessary to avoid damage to and/or interference with underground facilities

Excavation Safety Alert Information Sources

Non-emergency	311
Emergencies	911
New York 811	1-800-272-4480 or 811 http://newyork-811.com/
New York City Emergency Management	NYC.gov/emergencymanagement