



KCA TOOL BOX TALK: Emergency Actions for Damaged Gas Pipelines

PA Act 287 as amended requires excavators as well as private land owners to call PA One Call three business days before any kind of digging occurs with powered equipment. Statistics indicate that damage from excavation related activities is a leading cause of pipeline accidents. Workers need to be trained to know what to do in a pipeline emergency!

Signatures

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If a gas or petroleum line is hit with damage and is leaking:

- Stop all digging and leave the equipment in place
- Evacuate the work area and adjacent structures
- Remain upwind at a safe distance, 500 feet or more
- Under PA law, you must dial 9-1-1 or the local fire department
- Call the appropriate gas or petroleum company immediately from a safe distance (refer to the emergency numbers)
- Eliminate potential ignition sources, i.e., open flames, smoking materials, the starting or operating of motor vehicles, the use of phones, radios, doorbells, electric switches, flashlights, etc.
- Do not try to extinguish a fire unless there is a direct threat to life
- Do not operate any pipeline valves
- Cordon off the excavation area, keeping a minimum safe distance of 500 feet
- Do not attempt to stop the escape of gas by covering the leak with dirt
- Any damage to a line must be reported to the facility owner by law, and it is unlawful to cover up a line that may be damaged

If a gas or petroleum line is hit without apparent damage or leakage:

- Call the appropriate gas or petroleum company immediately from a safe distance (refer to the emergency numbers)
- Stop excavation activity until the facility owner clears you to proceed
- Special Note: If you hit a line and there is no apparent leak at that location, it is still possible that there could be secondary damage away from the site, resulting in a leak (In addition some pipelines have sensitive coatings that even when scraped or nicked may create holes; damage to a line may not be readily apparent when a line is exposed or hit)
- Reporting all damages, even minor nicks and gouges is required by PA law; minor nicks, gouges, or scrapes can and have been the cause of future failures (Some companies have policies in place to repair minor nicks, gouges and scrapes free of charge)