

Permit to Dig

Guidance on the operation of Estates and Facilities Permit to dig

1.0 Introduction

Many workers are killed or seriously injured every year as a result of them coming into contact with underground services when digging or driving stakes into the ground. The risks associated with this type of activity are very well known and must be taken seriously.

2.0 Risk assessment

Prior to any works commencing which involve digging or excavations a risk assessment must be carried and recorded by the person in charge of the project which will establish the likelihood of underground services being present in that area eg electric cables, gas pipes, water pipes, data cables, drains etc. In the event that the risk assessment identifies the possibility that underground services are present, the E&F Permit to dig must be implemented,

The only exception to this is when routine grounds maintenance work is being carried out in established flower beds eg planting, turning over soil etc

Important – you must remember that not all services are buried as deep beneath the earth as you would expect, in fact it is common to find cables and pipes at very shallow depths of just a few centimetres, and therefore you should never assume that you will be safe.

Things to ask yourself when carrying out the risk assessment:

- Have I the necessary experience and training in digging and excavation work to enable me to carry out this work safely? (If in any doubt ask do not proceed and ask your manager).
- Are there any buildings, street-lights, signs, drains or manholes nearby? All of which are fed by underground services.
- Am I working close to footpaths or the highway? Underground services often follow footpaths and highways.

Important:

The E&F person in charge of the project must ensure that this permit to dig is used in all circumstances where a risk of contact with underground services is foreseeable eg excavation work, driving stakes, installation of fencing posts etc.

Since a requirement of this permit to dig process is to request copies of the most recent utility service maps from utility companies, and it is known that this process can take up to 30 days to complete, it is imperative that all requests are made a minimum of 30 days prior to work commencing on site.

The Following people must be notified immediately:

Head of Maintenance	Tel: 0191 2086316
Head of Improvements	Tel: 0191 2083963
Team Manager NUIT	Tel: 0191 2085999
Security Manager	Tel: 0191 2086435
Grounds Maintenance Manager	Tel: 0191 2087964
Health & Safety Manager	Tel: 0191 2083757

Stage 1. Please complete all sections below	
Location of intended work	
Description of work	
Intended start date of work on site	
Print name of ESS person in charge of the project	
Signature of ESS person in charge of the project	
Date permit to dig process begins	

Stage 2. Requesting utility service maps from utility companies	
Maps of electric services	<p>Fax requests to 0191 2294287: Including address of area where work is intended and the postal address of the person making the request, please note this information must be included when making a postal request</p> <p>Postal requests: CE Electrics UK Record Information Centre New York Road Shiremoor Newcastle Upon Tyne NE27 OLP</p>

Maps of gas services	<p>Fax requests to 0191 5014412, for the attention of, The Plant Protection Department, and include the address and specific location of the intended work e.g. junction (a grid reference is preferred), description of the type of work intended and the postal details of the person making the request, please note this information must all be included when making a postal request.</p> <p>Postal requests: United Utilities 1 Emperor Way Doxford International Business Park Sunderland SR3 3XR</p>
Maps of Thus data network	<p>Written requests: THUS plc Gateway House, 322 Regents Park Road Finchley, London N3 2QQ or Tel: 0845 272 0666.</p>
Maps of water Mains and sewers	<p>Fax requests to 0191 3016517, For the attention of RASAWA Dept include Including address of area where work is intended and the postal address of the person making the request or Email requests to propertyolutions@nwl.co.uk</p>
British telecom	<p>Email nnhc@openreach.co.uk State your name and contact details Details of the location and name of the university buildings in the vicinity of the proposed excavation, alternatively you can fax requests to 01782 204846, the same information must be supplied as with email requests</p>
Virgin media	<p>Email: plant.enquiries.team@virginmedia.co.uk Stating your name and contact details Details of the location and name of the university buildings in the vicinity of the proposed excavation</p>
University Scanned record drawings	<p>Drawings held on turret2\cadmin03\drawings (note drawings may not be accurate)</p> <p>Additional information may be available in hard copy format in the Maintenance Office or on the Internet Property Register</p>

Having cross referenced all utility services maps and scanned record drawings indicate below which services have been located in the area of proposed excavation

Services	Present	Not identified
High Voltage		
Low Voltage		
Street Lighting		
Gas Main		
Telephone/Data		
Water main		
Drains/Sewers		
Heating mains		

Contractors or persons carrying out the dig		
Stage 3 Always proceed with caution and use Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) to scan the area to confirm the utility service maps accuracy		
Confirm CAT scan has taken place	Yes	No
CAT scan has identified additional services	Yes	No
List additional services here:		
Person in charge of project authorises dig to commence		
Print name	Signature	Date

Please Note: all excavation work must be carried out in accordance with:
HSG 47 Avoiding Danger from Underground Services - HSG 185 Health and safety in excavations, copies of these documents are available here
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg47.pdf>

Emergencies
Tel: 0191 2087171 or 01912086666 If you smell gas evacuate the area immediately and telephone 0800 111 999
Amendment of maps/drawings: upon completion of the work the drawings for the area must be amended and sent to the ESS Maintenance Team