

# Gas Pipeline Safety Guide

Be informed before  
you dig, and  
stay safe



At OnGas we want  
to keep all contractors,  
customers and the  
public safe.

Whenever you are digging  
on private or public property near  
gas pipelines, there is a serious risk to  
life and property if these pipes are damaged.

External interference is the leading cause of gas pipeline incidents, most commonly  
the use of excavation and directional drilling equipment.

If you hit a gas pipeline there is a risk of:

- Gas igniting and causing serious harm to life and property
- Gas accumulating in adjacent buildings and structures, which could cause an explosion

This booklet is a guide to safe working practices when working near our gas pipelines  
and provides information about the services we have to help you.



[www.ongas.co.nz](http://www.ongas.co.nz)

## Working safely around distribution pipelines

Before you begin any excavation or directional drilling work:

### Step 1.

#### Obtain reference maps

Call us at least two working days before you begin work and we'll provide reference maps by email showing underground pipeline locations. We may be able to provide plans in less than two days to meet an urgent request.

#### REFERENCE MAPS

Are provided via email and are valid for 14 days from date of issue. After 14 days you must request new maps

The accuracy of our maps cannot always be guaranteed. Road realignment, reconstruction, alterations to ground cover and property boundaries can all affect accuracy. You must hand dig to confirm the location of our pipes within your worksite before you start work.

Distribution pipelines, Dial before you dig  
**0508 B4U WORK (0508 248 967)**

### Step 2.

#### Mark out the pipeline locations

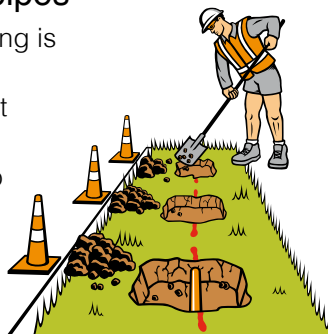
Use the maps to mark out the location of all pipelines on the worksite before you excavate. Maps are a guide only. Use an electronic cable/pipe locator whenever possible. Alternatively, if you have difficulty interpreting the maps, we can provide an on-site pipeline location service for you.



### Step 3.

#### Hand dig to expose pipes

Why hand dig? Hand digging is less likely to cause serious damage to pipes. You must dig with caution for your own safety. Any damage to a pipe should be reported to OnGas immediately.



**Remember to watch out for customer service pipes coming off a main.**

## Distribution pipeline depths

Distribution pipes are laid at different depths in the ground, varying from 400mm to over 1200mm. Customer service pipes are generally between 450mm and 1000mm deep.

Alterations to the ground cover may reduce or increase the depths. We cannot guarantee the depth of any pipe. Don't rely on finding buried marker tape when you dig as this may have shifted over time.



**Never assume you know exactly where the pipeline is located – always contact us.**

## Distribution pipelines safe digging checklist

- Get reference maps before you start work
- If our maps show gas pipelines you must locate them before you start work
- The actual location and depth of pipes can differ from what's on our maps because other earthworks can change these
- On-site pipeline location services are a guide only always hand dig to confirm the location of the pipeline
- Always hand dig to expose pipes
- Watch out for customer service pipes coming off the mains
- Follow the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) 'Guide for Safety with Underground Services'

## Disconnect before you remove or demolish a building

For your own safety, you must have your gas service disconnected from The OnGas network in the street and have your meter removed before you demolish or remove a building.

**Contact OnGas on 0800 84 12 12 for gas disconnections.**

**You should allow 10 working days notice. Charges may apply.**



# What to do in an emergency

If you hit a gas pipe, or smell or hear gas escaping:

- Switch off all machinery and remove all sources of ignition, including mobile phones
- Move yourself and others to a safe area (at least 100 metres upwind)
- Report the emergency by calling us on 0800 84 12 12
- Call the fire service on 111 if you have any safety concerns
- Leave the damaged pipe to vent
- DO NOT try to cover the damaged pipe with any material, including digger buckets
- DO NOT start any vehicles for removal
- DO NOT attempt to extinguish ignited gas
- Report any damage to gas pipes, even if the pipe is not leaking

One of our emergency response teams will be sent to the site immediately. Our trained personnel will make the area safe isolate the gas supply if required and repair the damaged section of pipe.

**EMERGENCY CONTACT: 0800 84 12 12**

## Report all damage to pipelines

In the event of any damage, no matter how minor it may appear, it is essential that you notify OnGas immediately. Any damage to the coating or denting of the pipe could seriously impact the integrity, or shorten the life of the pipeline. **Never** try to repair the pipeline yourself. Repairs must only be made under OnGas supervision or by a Vector representative.

**You can help us keep the pipelines safe by reporting any pipeline exposure, damage or signs of defects that could put the pipelines at risk.**

## Your legal requirements

The Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has minimum safe work practices for carrying out any work near gas pipelines. Its 'Guide for Safety with Underground Services' states; "All underground services shall be physically identified, by way of pot holing using hand tools only, before any excavation can be carried out with machinery."

**Anyone who damages a gas pipeline as a result of unsafe work practice may be found in breach of the act and liable to prosecution by the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE).**

There are laws and regulations that specify safe working practices which must be followed:

- Electricity Act 1992 and amendments.
- Gas Act 1992 and amendments.
- Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 and amendments.
- NZECP 34:2001 Electrical Safe Distances.
- Health and Safety in Employment (Pipelines Regulations 1999)

OnGas may take legal action to recover both the cost of repairs and the cost of lost business from any party or parties responsible for damaging our pipelines.

## About us

OnGas is the gas retail brand for Vector Limited. Vector is New Zealand's leading multi network infrastructure company. Our group owns and manages a range of energy, technology and service businesses and assets which touch more than one million New Zealand homes and business. We own and operate electricity distribution networks and high speed fibre-optic networks in Auckland and Wellington, and gas processing, transmission and distribution networks throughout the North Island.

# OnGas owned and managed networks



## Disclaimer

OnGas Limited does not accept any liability for any information contained in this document. None of OnGas Limited or its related companies:

- Accept liability for any loss or damage suffered or incurred by the recipient of this document, or any other person or entity however caused (including negligence) relating in any way to this document including, without limitation, the information contained in it or any errors in or omissions from it, or the recipient, or any other person or entity, placing any reliance on this document, its accuracy, completeness, currency or reliability
- Accept any responsibility, arising in any way, for any errors in or omissions from this document, or for any lack of accuracy, completeness, currency or reliability of this document
- Accept any responsibility to inform the recipient of any matter arising or coming to their notice that may affect any matter referred to in this document.

Head office: 101 Carlton Gore Road, PO Box 99882,  
Newmarket, Auckland 1023. Ph 0800 84 12 12

[www.ongas.co.nz](http://www.ongas.co.nz)

