

## **Plant not permitted to penetrate ground unless non-destructive service proving has been conducted first**

**Plant such as excavators and other earthmoving equipment are not permitted to penetrate the ground in road reserves unless the immediate area has first been thoroughly checked for services by non-destructive means.**

Plant is not permitted to locate services because this frequently results in damaged services, significant safety risks and does not comply with the required *WorkSafe Framework for Works near Services*. Dial Before You Dig (DBYD) plans only show the approximate locations and their exact location needs to be confirmed by non-destructive means. No guarantee can be given that all existing services are shown on plans.

The *WorkSafe Framework for Works near Services and the Guide for Undertaking Work near Underground Assets* require that only non-destructive excavation methods be used when proving the locations of services or when working close to services already identified and marked.

Works close to high voltage cables or pressurised gas distribution mains or piping is also classified as high risk work requiring a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS).

Some plant operators appear to be unaware of these requirements, even though they need to be competent in this area to safely work in the road environment- where most of the underground services are located.

### **Minimum approach distances apply**

1. The WorkSafe Framework for Undertaking Work near Overhead and Underground Assets specify that a safe system of work (including competent trained operators and spotters) are required for work 'near' underground assets. 'Near' is defined as a distance of 3 metres from an asset registered under the Pipeline Act or an underground electrical cable with voltage greater than 66kV. For other underground services distances of 2 metres applies.
2. Provided that a safe system of work including SWMS and competent trained operators are used then work can be conducted within the 2-3 metres No Go Zone provided that the minimum approach distances in Table A below are not breached. Naturally the accurate location of the asset needs to be proved via a non-destructive means such as hydro excavation or electronic locater device, NOT an earthmoving machine.

**Table A on the next page specifies the minimum approach clearances permissible for each type of underground asset.**

# Safety Alert

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**Table A**

<b>TYPES OF UNDERGROUND ASSETS</b> (Note: the owners of assets registered with the Dial Before You Dig service and covered by this guide require an enquiry through this free service and the compliance with any directive issued with information regarding the asset).	Minimum clearances for individuals (A), and the operating envelope of the plant and equipment (B) under the guidelines. (Refer to Table B)	Safety Controls required for the Deemed to Comply guideline provisions to take effect or where specific permission has been granted.
6. Assets listed under the Pipelines Act.	3000mm	Must contact the Asset Owner for specific conditions.
7. All electricity conductors greater than 66kV	3000mm	Must contact the Asset Owner for specific conditions.
8. All electricity conductors up to and including 66kV	300mm (A), 500mm (B)	See specific requirements in the underground guidelines
9. Telecommunication Cables	300mm (A), 500mm (B)	Must contact the Asset Owner for specific conditions
10. All gas pipelines other than 6 above.	300mm (A), 500mm(B)	See specific requirements in the underground guidelines.
11. Water, Drainage and Sewerage pipelines.	300mm (A), 500mm (B)	Must contact the Asset Owner for specific conditions

Note that some owners may have a requirement for greater clearances than articulated here, to ensure the integrity of their assets at a particular worksite. Any information pertaining to this additional requirement is expected to be provided with the response to an asset enquiry.

**Table B (Colour Code)**

<b>UNDERGROUND ELECTRICAL ASSETS</b>	
Operating envelope	
Outside near	No guidance required
Inside 'near', outside Table A	Safe systems of work
At or inside Table A	Permission spotter & safe systems of work

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