



Excavating contractors pay up for gas line hits

In an effort to increase public safety, the BC Safety Authority (BCSA) has collected monetary penalties related to gas safety from two companies this year.

In the first case, a \$7,400 monetary penalty was collected from BC Underground Contractors, an excavating company in Kelowna, after obtaining a court order to seize assets.

An incident investigation by BC Safety Authority in February 2010, determined that BC Underground Contractors damaged a main gas line causing a release of natural gas and disruption of service to more than 850 homes in the Black Mountain area near Kelowna.

The Gas Safety Regulation requires excavators to confirm the location of underground gas lines by hand-digging before the use of mechanized equipment. This regulation is intended to protect public and environmental safety by preventing damage to gas systems that could result in gas leaks, explosions, fires, and environmental damage.

The BC Safety Authority determined that the contractor did not confirm the location of the gas line before excavating and issued a compliance order requiring the owner of BC Underground Contractors to implement safe excavating procedures by their employees.

In March 2010, a subsequent line was damaged by the same contractor. This incident happened during excavating activity in the vicinity of a private residence in Kelowna and being the second incident, BC Safety Authority then imposed a monetary penalty.

A \$250 monetary penalty was also imposed on Chet Construction Ltd for not excavating in accordance with the Gas Safety Regulation after an investigation found that the company caused gas line hit incidents.

Quarterly statistics on enforcement actions are published on BC Safety Authority's website at: www.safetyauthority.ca/enforcement.

In order to understand enforcement actions in the broader perspective of BC's safety system, please refer to the State of Safety Report which can be accessed at www.safetyauthority.ca/about/publications.

The BC Safety Authority keeps people safe by mandating the safe installation and use of technical equipment. BCSA also issues permits and licences, educates, and conducts on-site inspections in high-risk situations.

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