

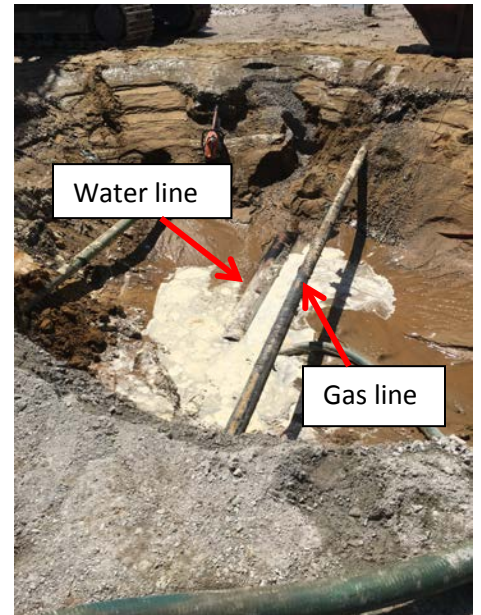
Safety Flash

Incident with Property Damage

Incident: The crew struck a 10-inch water line about 2 feet below a live gas line which they were exposing in preparation for installing a trench box and sanitary sewer line.

Possible contributing factors:

- The gas and water lines were close together.
- The crew had exposed the water and gas lines 35 feet away three weeks earlier, and thought there would be the same distance between the water and gas lines when they exposed the lines at a different location.
- The operator was digging across and under the gas and water lines instead of parallel to them.
- The water line was not exposed before excavation began as required by RLI's utility locating procedure.
- Sand is difficult to dig because it continuously runs back into the excavation.
- The crew thought if they excavated under the gas line, the sand would slide off and expose the water line.
- The crew did not realize that Badger Daylighting's marks identified only the gas line, not the water line.
- The decision was based on identifying conflicts, not utilities for excavation.



Primary contributing factor:

- The water line was not exposed before excavation began as required by RLI's utility locating procedure.

Possible solutions:

- Make sure the crew knows and follows RLI's excavation policy.
- Expose utilities with pot holes and mark utility crossings.
- Identify areas to expose with pot holes and locate utilities at the beginning of projects.
- Consider planning the direction of excavation based on known utilities.

Action plan:

- Develop a formal process to identify and locate utilities at the beginning of the project.
- Review safety manual sections on utility locating/excavation process to identify early pre-install.
- Train superintendents and operators on RLI excavation policies in our safety manual and review as needed.

Keep improving

Your health and safety are our core value on every project. If you see a way we can support you in keeping our job sites safe, see your supervisor or contact: Jim Philo, 419/654-2043; Rich Franklin, Michigan, 734/679-7283; Alan Doane, Cleveland, 440/429-0639; Chad Metzger, Lima, 419/279-5348 or Mark Hoffman, 419/360-9280.