

# Underground Service Locating Policy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy addresses the Council's approach to working with external parties that need to locate and work around its underground services.
- 1.2. The BeforeUdig process is an online service which provides information on the location of underground pipes and cables in and around any proposed excavation site. This assists with protecting both excavation workers, and below ground assets, during excavation.
- 1.3. Each utility provider that is part of the BeforeUdig service provides a plan of their underground assets in that area. Persons wishing to proceed with excavation works apply for a Corridor Access Request (CAR) which is forwarded to the Council with a Traffic Management Plan. If approved, a Works Access Permit (WAP) is issued.
- 1.4. The Council requires a standard approach for locating and protecting assets as part of BeforeUdig applications, and in particular requires a consistent approach for handling requests to mark out services in the field or monitor works adjacent to key assets.
- 1.5. A standard approach will:
  - Reduce the number of personnel injuries
  - Protect the Council's underground assets from interruption and preventable damage
  - Ensure that Council corridors are maintained and new services are not installed over, or near, assets that might interrupt the efficient operation of the assets
  - Provide information to all contractors through the BeforeUdig system to understand their responsibilities while working around the Council's 3 Waters assets
  - Provide a clear disclaimer that outlines responsibilities and sets out that the Council will claim back costs if its assets are damaged
  - Provide for monitoring services when contractors are working near critical assets to minimise the chance of asset damage or disruption to the wider community.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline Council's approach to locate and protect 3 Waters assets through the "Before You Dig" (BeforeUdig) process or other applicable processes currently in place or to be developed in future.
- 2.2. The policy is designed to protect Council's 3 Waters assets, particularly as a result of third party damage.

## 3. Scope

The policy applies to situations where external parties working in the road corridor or on private property need to identify and work around Council assets, and provides processes to avoid risk of incidental damage to these assets.

## 4. Policy objectives

This policy seeks to define the roles and responsibilities of the Council and contractors (e.g.: external contractors, other utility operators and private property owners) in locating and protecting Council under-ground assets when working in the road corridor or on private property.

## 5. Policy statement

- 5.1. The Council will provide a location service to all contractors working near Council underground assets, consistent with other utility providers, by using Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) and pot-holing to mark out the location of the underground service on the surface. This will involve:
- Council will mark out its assets, if requested by the contractor, using GPR and pot-holing. This service will be provided by the Council and charged to the contractor
  - Contractors will be responsible to locate and protect Council assets shown on the service plans provided as part of the BeforeUdig process
  - Council will require a “stand over” monitor for working near critical assets (criticality A or AA). The monitoring will be provided by the Council and charged to the contractor
  - Council will locate any assets not in the vicinity shown on the service plans that the contractor has not been able to locate and update the asset records at Council's cost.
- 5.2. The National Code of Practice for Utility Operators Access to Transport Corridors (the Code) requires the contractor to ensure that they notify the utility operators and corridor manager before excavation proceeds. Council will, as part of the BeforeUdig process, provide the procedures to follow when working near Council underground services.
- 5.3. The Code also indicates that it is the contractor's responsibility to locate all affected underground services in accordance with the requirements of the corridor manager and the utility providers. Where excavations are required to locate underground assets, the Code provides for utility operators to observe works in close proximity to their utilities.
- 5.4. The Code also states that if the contractor cannot locate an underground asset in close proximity to the identified location, they are to notify the utility operator or corridor manager who is responsible for identifying or correctly locating its assets, which places an obligation on Council to assist the contractor if the underground Council asset cannot be located.
- 5.5. The Code places responsibility on contractors to ensure works do not damage or disrupt the integrity of the utility providers' assets. Affected utility providers can seek to recover costs from parties that fail to comply with these requirements.
- 5.6. Council is required under the Code to hold records of the location of the underground utilities and provide details and plans noting the location of their assets. There is acknowledgement within the Code that the location of older infrastructure may not be completely accurate, but still obliges utility operators to provide information that is as accurate as reasonably possible. The Code notes that the utility provider is required to provide on request from a contractor the same level of detail as is available to the utility provider.
- 5.7. While the Code does not cover private property where there are Council assets underground, this policy and the BeforeUdig process extends to services on private property.
- 5.8. The Council will proceed with providing maps noting the indicative location of the Council underground services with the following disclaimer:

*Boundary information is derived under licence from LINZ Digital Cadastral Database (Crown Copyright Reserved). The Waimakariri District Council does not give and expressly disclaims any warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the information or its fitness for any purpose. Information on this map may not be used for the purposes of any legal disputes. The user should independently verify the accuracy of any information before taking any action in reliance upon it.*

*The location of Council services are shown indicatively only and no guarantee is given as to the accuracy of the information. The user of the information has the responsibility to confirm the exact location of the service prior to commencing construction. When excavating in the vicinity of any Council service the contractor is responsible for pot-holing and protecting existing services and will be held responsible for all damage to Council property. The Council does not guarantee the existence of service laterals to vacant lots, regardless of whether a lateral is shown or not.*

- 5.9. Council will provide monitoring as a requirement when personnel or contractors are working near critical Council assets as identified by 3 Waters at the applicant's expense.
- 5.10. The Council will provide assistance to the contractor if underground assets are unable to be located using GPR and pot-holing via hydro excavation, which will be charged to the applicant.

## 6. Responsibilities

All approvals under this policy will sit with the 3 Waters Manager.

## 7. Definitions

**The National Code of Practice for Utility Operators Access to Transport Corridors** - covers general responsibilities of all parties working in the transport corridor.

## 8. Questions

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the 3 Waters Manager in the first instance.

## 9. Relevant documents and legislation

- National Code of Practice for Utility Operators Access to Transport Corridors
- Utilities Access Act 2010
- Waimakariri District council Water Supply Bylaw 2018
- Waimakariri District Council Wastewater Bylaw 201
- Waimakariri District Council Stormwater Drainage and Watercourse Protection Bylaw 2018.

## 10. Effective date

2 May 2023

## 11. Review date

2 May 2029

## 12. Policy owned by

General Manager, Utilities and Roading

## 13. Approval

Adopted by Waimakariri District Council on 2 May 2023