

PROPOSAL 2b – Updates to 5-20

5.20 Excavation within Tolerance Zone

Practice Statement:

When excavation is to take place within the specified tolerance zone, the excavator exercises such reasonable care as may be necessary for the protection of any underground facility in or near the excavation area. Methods to consider, based on certain climate or geographical conditions, include pot holing, hand digging when practical, soft digging, vacuum excavation methods, pneumatic hand tools, other mechanical methods with the approval of the facility owner/operator, or other technical methods that may be developed. Hand digging and non-invasive methods are not required for pavement removal.

Practice Description:

Safe, prudent, non-invasive methods that require the excavator to manually determine the actual location of a facility are considered “safe excavation practices” in a majority of state/provincial laws. A majority of states outline safe excavation practices to include hand digging and/or pot holing. Some states specifically allow for the use of power excavating equipment for the removal of pavement. Each state/province must take differing geologic conditions and weather-related factors into consideration when recommending types of excavation within the tolerance zone.

Reference:

Existing state laws, including Arizona, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and others

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Practice Description:

Safe, prudent, non-invasive methods that require the excavator to manually determine the actual location of a facility are considered “safe excavation practices” in a majority of state/provincial laws (~~38 states~~). A majority of states outline safe excavation practices to include hand digging ~~and~~/or pot holing (~~16 states~~). Some states specifically allow for the use of power excavating equipment for the removal of pavement. Each state/province must take differing geologic conditions and ~~weather related~~~~weather-related~~ factors into consideration when recommending types of excavation within the tolerance zone.

Reference: Existing state laws, including Arizona, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and others