



April 27, 2020

Dear Business Owner:

Caution: Avoid Risk to Yourself and Others – “Call Before You Clear”

In 2010, a home in Saint Paul, Minn., was destroyed after a sewer cleaner’s auger struck an underground natural gas line that intersected a sewer line. As a company that may perform this work, we wanted to make you aware of a potential safety hazard known as “cross-bores.”

“Cross-bores” occur when natural gas lines are unintentionally installed through sewer and/or septic lines. The hazard occurs when mechanical equipment used to unclog sewer and septic lines hits and penetrates a natural gas line which then can lead to a dangerous and unintended release of natural gas.

Together, participating natural gas utility companies in Minnesota and other states are asking plumbers, sewer cleaning contractors and customers to contact the natural gas utility serving the area before they attempt to clear a sewer line.

Here are the participating utilities in the state of Minnesota:

CenterPoint Energy
1-855-820-0127

Xcel Energy
1-800-895-2999

Minnesota Energy Resources
1-800-889-4970

Greater Minnesota Gas
1-888-931-3411

When you call, the participating utility will determine whether an in-sewer camera inspection is needed. If an in-sewer camera inspection is needed, the participating utility will send a professionally trained sewer camera contractor to the location to complete an inspection. There is no charge for any required in-sewer camera inspections.

We have developed a website to provide you, your employees and the public in formation on the issue of cross-bores. The website (www.callbeforeyouclear.com) includes a safety video, frequently asked questions regarding cross-bores, and information about what you should do before clearing a sewer line.

So before you or a member of your company attempts to clear a sewer or septic line, please contact the natural gas utility serving the area to ensure there are no conflicts with underground natural gas lines. Since April is the State of Minnesota’s month to promote the Call Before You Dig message, we are sending this letter to complement the Call Before You Dig message: call 811 before commencing projects that involve digging holes or installing posts in your yard.

If you have any questions, please contact Hannah Gullickson, Communication Specialist at CenterPoint Energy, at hannah.gullickson@centerpointenergy.com.

Thank you for your cooperation.