



## ***Public Service Announcement***

**May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

### **Digging? Don't Forget to Call!**

*EDMONTON, Alberta* – There are many things that lie buried beneath the ground including power lines and gas lines. If damaged, these can be deadly. Last year, ATCO Gas responded to more than 900 hit line calls throughout Alberta—many from weekend excavators digging in fence posts and planting trees.

"We are concerned about the safety of our customers and the public. ATCO Gas wants to remind them of a very real danger that is easily avoided by using the free Call Before You Dig service," says Jerome Engler, President, ATCO Gas. "Hit lines can result in serious injuries or fatalities and major property damage."

To alert Albertans of this service that could save lives, ATCO Gas is taking its "Call Before You Dig" message on the road this year. For the first time ever—the company has wrapped 16 of its vehicles in eye-catching giant-sized boot and shovel graphics with the message "Safety is Our Concern. Call Before You Dig. 1-800-242-3447".

The vehicles will begin to make their appearance just as the province sees more pleasurable temperatures. "When digging swings into high gear, that's when most accidents happen," says Engler. Each year, about 40 percent of hit gas lines are caused because people do not request line locates.

The biggest myth about underground gas lines is that they are located deep below the ground surface. This is not necessarily true. Gas lines are initially installed about one meter below ground, but as structures are built and topsoil is moved, lines can be much closer to the surface.

"A shovel can be a weapon if not used properly," explains Engler. "All hit lines are preventable and repairs can be expensive. Homeowners should know where their gas lines are before they begin any digging and know how to properly work around them." To ensure safety, all gas lines must be hand exposed before starting any digging activity within a one meter buffer zone on either side of locate marks.

Many incidents are on private property where homeowners are removing tree roots, digging fence post holes, anchoring supports for decks, driving stakes into the ground for landscaping or anchoring swing sets.

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At least two working days before any digging begins on a residential or business property, individuals should phone Alberta One-Call. This line location service is provided at no charge and is funded by ATCO Gas and other underground facility owners. Alberta One-Call provides a single point of contact to request locates for natural gas, electricity, water, sewer and other underground facilities.

Save money, time, and even your life by calling Alberta One-Call before you dig.

ATCO Gas is part of the ATCO Group of companies, a premier Alberta-based corporation operating worldwide in five business groups: Utilities, Logistics and Energy Services, Power Generation, Technologies and Industrials.

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### Editor's Note:

A photo and caption are also provided with this story.

**CAPTION:** ATCO Gas urges homeowners and contractors to call for gas line locates before any outdoor digging project begins.

For more information, please contact:

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