

Call before you dig; it's the sensible thing to do

With warm weather just around the corner, many gardening, remodeling and building projects will soon be underway. NW Natural urges people to "Call Before You Dig" to prevent damage and service interruptions that can be caused by digging into underground utility lines. Notifying utilities before starting anywork that requires digging is necessary for safety and required by law.

The "Call Before You Dig" safety warning applies to anyone who may be digging — contractors, excavators or homeowners. Notification is easy and free; all it takes is one call to a notification center at least two full working days before excavation is to begin. After the center receives a call, it will alert participating utilities, which will locate and mark their lines with color-coded paint.

Anyone who fails to call and damages underground services, can be held liable for all repair costs. More importantly, damage to a gas pipe or an electric cable poses a significant safety hazard.

Polyethylene pipe that is widely used for natural gas distribution can be damaged by everyday tools like shovels and post hole diggers. It is easy to avoid damages and potentially dangerous situations by calling before digging.

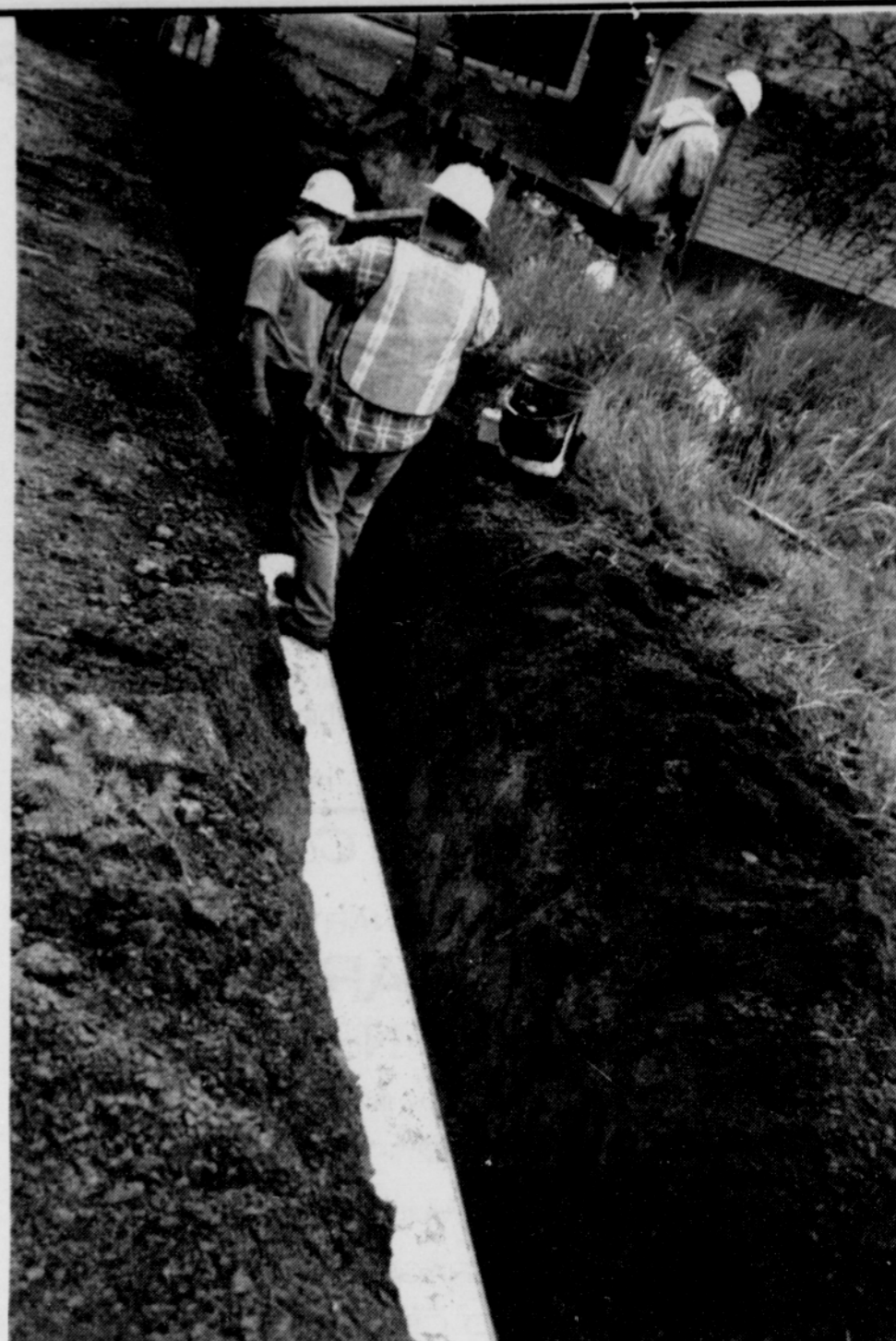
Upon notification of proposed excavation from the notification center, NW Natural will identify the location of the natural gas pipe with yellow paint. The law requires that anyone digging in the marked area must carefully hand excavate with a shovel instead of using a backhoe or other power equipment, and must take

care not to damage the pipe once it is exposed.

NW Natural experiences damage to approximately 1,800 gas lines each year that are attributed to excavation. Nearly half of those are caused by an excavator who did not notify NW Natural of their intent to dig. Most of the remaining damages are a result of excavators who were not careful when digging around exposed lines.

The Oregon Utility Notification Center can be reached at 246-6699 in the Portland metro area, 696-4848 in Clark County, Wash. and 1-800-332-2344 in all other areas of Oregon.

Remember, don't risk digging into buried natural gas, water, sewer, telephone, fiber optic, cable television or electric lines. Call before you dig. It's free and it's the law.



This is a scene enacted in many places throughout Vernonia as work continues on replacement and repair of the city's 60-70 year old water distribution system.

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something in Salem, but most of us prevailed in showing the relationship between our local fairs and the State Fair. As was explained on the floor, providing opportunities for kids to participate in FFA, 4-H and other similar programs and giving them a chance to display their accomplishments is not always a money-making proposition. For so many, the Oregon State Fair is a culmination of extremely worthwhile activities for our youth — as well as something we adults appreciate.

One of the important issues still awaiting a resolution is the transportation package. Every-

one agrees that more money is needed to fix and improve our roads. We in District 2 can attest to that with real and extreme examples! Unfortunately, how to raise those funds and how much to tax is a difficult issue. We have been dealing with this issue all session and it has changed dramatically and often over the past six months. The balance between taxes on fuel, licensing fees, and the current weight-mile revenues is a tenuous one at best. This balance will be determined in the next few days if we are to get a package out at all.

I still remain somewhat optimistic that we will have a bud-

et before leaving here so we do not have to have a special session.

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