

Breaking ground creates a major hazard during construction activities or work requiring excavation or trenching. The dangers include:

- Striking underground services (e.g., electrical, gas, etc.)
- People, equipment or materials falling into the excavation
- Collapse of excavation or trench walls and/or adjacent structures
- Mechanical and overhead hazards (e.g., power lines); and
- Flooding, contaminated ground, and toxic or asphyxiating gases

LIFE SAVING RULE

When breaking ground, YOU MUST:

- Using suitable locating devices and site plans identify and mark underground services
- Inspect excavations prior to starting work or after any changes to conditions (e.g., rain, snow or ice) to confirm they remain stable, and safe for further work
- Prevent wall collapse using a suitable method (e.g., benching, trench box, etc.); and
- Provide a safe means of access, and
- Use barriers and signage to prevent unauthorised access

