

# Ground Disturbance Requirements

Field Surveillance and Operations Branch

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# Disclaimer

- 》 The following information is provided for guidance and summary purposes only and is not an exhaustive description of AER requirements relating to a given topic or subject area.
- 》 Operators and licensees must at all times comply with and should consult all applicable AER requirements before undertaking any activity.

# Purpose

- 》 Educate industry on AER ground disturbance requirements, and
- 》 promote safe excavation regarding underground facilities.

# Definitions

## 》 Ground Disturbance

》 any activity disturbing the ground, including:

- 》 excavating
- 》 leveling
- 》 digging
- 》 removing peat
- 》 trenching
- 》 clearing
- 》 plowing
- 》 pounding posts
- 》 Drilling
- 》 augering
- 》 tunneling
- 》 backfilling
- 》 quarrying
- 》 blasting
- 》 grading
- 》 stripping topsoil

# Definitions

Continued

- › either exceeding 30 centimeters in depth or permanently reducing the amount of pipeline cover.
- › deep tillage cultivation practices exceeding 45 centimeters depth are considered ground disturbances.

# Definitions

Continued

## » Pipeline

- » A pipe used to convey a substance or combination of substances, including installations associated with the pipe.



# Definitions

Continued

## 》 Surface Construction Activity

》 Activity concentrated at the surface of the ground or at a depth of less than 30 centimeters and does not result in a reduction of the earth cover over a pipeline to a depth that is less than the cover provided when the pipeline was installed.

# Controlled Area and ROW





# Controlled Area

- 》 The land parallel to a pipeline for 30 meters along each side, without limitation, from the centerline of the pipeline.
- 》 An AER prescribed distance within the *Pipeline Regulation*.



# Right-of-Way (ROW)

- › Private agreement between the landowner and licensee at the time of construction which grants use to the licensee as per ROW Agreement.
- › A caveat is registered on the land title to show interest but does not mean ownership.



# Licensee Approval is Required

- 》 Anyone conducting ground disturbance within a pipeline ROW or, within 5 meters of the centerline of a pipeline requires **written approval** from the pipeline owner, or

# Licensee Approval is Required

Continued

- 》 a vehicle crossing a pipeline not within a upgraded and travelled portion of a highway or public road **requires approval from the licensee**, unless the vehicle or equipment is used for farming operations or is defined as an off-highway or private vehicle by the *Traffic Safety Act*.

# Licensee Requirements

- › Accurately locate and mark pipeline within 2 days of request excluding weekends and holidays.
- › May delegate its responsibility of marking and locating to the excavator if mutually agreed upon.
  - › Note: specific exemptions for locating and marking can be found in *Pipeline Regulation Part 5, 60(8)*.



# Licensee Requirements

Continued

- 》 When approval for a ground disturbance activity is requested, the licensee must respond in writing within 21 days of the request.
- 》 Provide documentation of the markings to the person undertaking the ground disturbance.
- 》 Have current certification for supervising a ground disturbance.

# Licensee Requirements

Continued

- 》 Carry out any inspections of the ground disturbance necessary to ensure the continued.
- 》 Be present at the time the pipeline is being exposed, unless the licensee and the person undertaking the ground disturbance agree otherwise.

# Licensee Requirements

Continued

- › Supervise any mechanical excavation within 60 centimeters of the pipeline or any distance beneath it.
- › Inspect **without delay** the exposed part of the pipeline before backfilling and carry out any inspections of the ground disturbance necessary to ensure the continued safety of the pipeline.

# No Fees for Ground Disturbance Activities

- 》 Retain the inspection documentation for 2 years.
- 》 All marking, locating, supervision and inspection required within the ground disturbance portion of the *Pipeline Regulation* is to be done **without charging any fee** to the party undertaking the ground disturbance.

# Guidelines for Safe Construction

- › call Alberta One-Call 1-800-242-3447
- › check AER records
- › check with local utility services
- › check land title for easements
- › look for warning signs where pipelines cross roads, railways, or water bodies
- › look for wells, tanks or valves



# Guidelines for Safe Construction

Continued

- › look for ground settling from previous work
- › communicate with nearby/ adjacent landowners

# Excavator Requirements

- 》 Keep all pipeline warning signs or markers visible and legible for the duration of the ground disturbance.
- 》 Install temporary fencing, if necessary, to control excavation equipment travelling over the pipeline.
- 》 Obtain permission to cross pipeline with vehicles, if required.

# Excavator Requirements

Continued

- 》 Call the pipeline owner **at least** 24 hrs. before backfilling any exposed pipeline.
- 》 Outside of the ROW and greater than 5 meters from the centerline of the pipeline:
  - 》 obtain permission to cross pipeline with excavating equipment, if required.

# Excavator Requirements

Continued

- 》 Note: Approval **is not** required from the licensee unless there are vehicles crossing the pipeline.
  
- 》 Within 5 meters of the centerline of the pipeline:
  - 》 obtain approval from the licensee.
  - 》 locate and expose pipeline by hand excavation.

# Excavator Requirements

Continued

- › ensure no mechanical excavating equipment is
  - › within 60 centimeters of the pipeline or any distance.
  - › beneath without direct supervision.



# Pipeline Hit

- › Stop work and notify the licensee immediately.
- › The licensee must report the hit to the AER immediately.

# Powers and Duties of the AER

- 》 Can grant approval for ground disturbance activity:
  - 》 within a ROW
  - 》 within 5 meters of the centerline of the pipeline, and
  - 》 for vehicles crossing a pipeline

# Additional Resources

- 》 To report Oil and Gas Operational Concerns or Emergencies call:
  - 》 1-800-222-6514
  
- 》 For Questions related to AER Regulations, Requirements, or Processes call:
  - 》 1-855-297-8311
  
- 》 AER website [www.aer.ca](http://www.aer.ca).

# Additional Resources

Continued

## » Field Centres

» Bonnyville

780-826-5352

» Drayton Valley

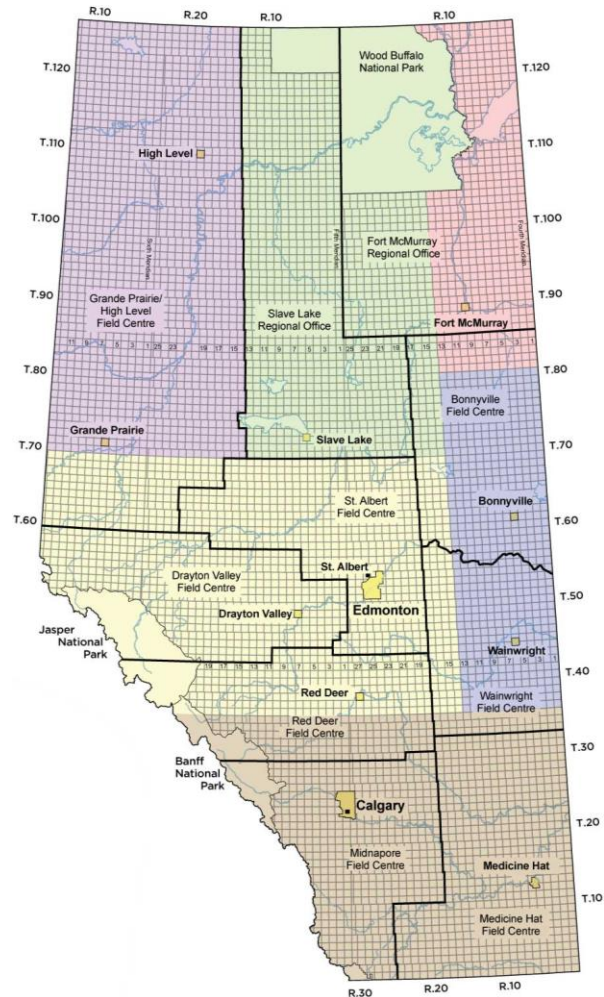
780-542-5182

» Grande Prairie

780-538-5138

» High Level

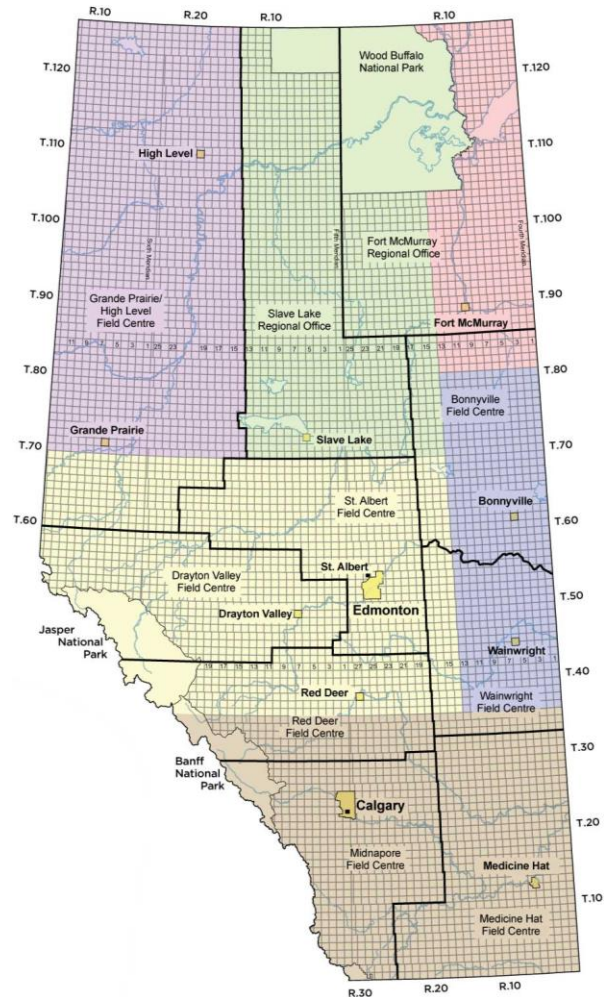
780-926-5399



# Additional Resources

Continued

- 》 Medicine Hat  
403-527-3385
- 》 Midnapore  
403-297-8303
- 》 Red Deer  
403-340-5454
- 》 St. Albert  
780-460-3800
- 》 Wainwright  
780-842-7570





# Additional Resources

Continued

## » Regional Offices

### » Slave Lake

780-843-2050

### » Fort McMurray

780-743-7141

