



# Public Utilities Fast Facts

September, 2018

New Service Contact (865) 558-2555

## A. General

1. The Tennessee Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act (UUDPA) has specific requirements for anyone engaging in excavation activities, including excavators must notify the Tennessee 811 (TN811) at least 3 working days prior to excavating. See the TN UUDPA for more detailed information about requirements for excavators.
2. Buildings, storm water ponds, retaining walls, fences, decks, or other permanent structures must not encroach on existing utility facilities, maintenance zones, or easements.
3. The ground elevation must not be changed within existing utility maintenance zones or easements without approval from the appropriate utility owner(s).
4. Guard posts will be required around ground mounted utility equipment (i.e. electric transformers, gas meters, etc.) when vehicles are able to pass within 3 feet of the equipment.

## B. Electric

1. Horizontal clearances from buildings or structures adjacent to overhead wires, conductors, or cables must be a minimum of 15 feet for lines energized at 50 kV or less. Property Owners and/or Third-Party Contractors must contact the public electric system authority concerning safety measures required when working around public power lines if the equipment (vehicles, scaffolding, ladders, etc.) or personnel are within 10 feet of lines energized at 50 kV or less. Lifting equipment (cranes or other equipment defined by the OSHA crane standard) and suspended loads must maintain a 20-foot minimum distance from power lines.
2. Customer owned electric sustainability uses (solar, wind farms, generators, etc.) must be installed to provide adequate utility worker safety measures to prevent back feed of electricity to the public electrical system during storm and maintenance related outages on the public system.

## C. Gas

1. Gas meters and related equipment have specific requirements for location, installation, final grade, and protection. Contact the appropriate gas utility owner for specific requirements.

## **D. Wastewater**

1. Grease generated by residential, commercial, industrial, food service facilities, mobile food units, etc. must be controlled and prevented from entering the public wastewater system to avoid issues such as sewer backups and odors at the customer's property as well as public sewer overflows. The grease generator is required to follow all rules and regulations of the wastewater authority.
2. An Industrial Pretreatment Program must be followed by industries and businesses that discharge pollutants that may interfere with transport and treatment of wastewater. If these pollutants enter the public wastewater system, harm to treatment plant processes, the public, collection system employees, and the effluent receiving stream can occur.
3. All wastewater laterals must be inspected by the appropriate City authority to insure proper installation and water tightness.
4. Storm water sources (i.e. gutters, area drains, parking lot runoff, etc.) must not be connected to any wastewater facilities.
5. Rainwater harvesting that discharges into the public wastewater system must be metered by the wastewater authority to insure proper billing for transport and treatment.

## **E. Water**

1. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Division of Water Supply requires all water utilities to have an approved Cross-Connection Program that prevents contaminated water from homes (swimming pools, sprinkler systems, etc.) and businesses (sprinkler systems, fire lines, irrigation, etc.) from flowing backward into the public water supply if the public system loses pressure during an outage. Customers with potential cross-connections must install, test, and maintain a backflow prevention device as required by the public water authority.
2. Unmetered fire lines must not be tapped for other uses.
3. Fire lines must not be turned off without City of Knoxville Fire Marshal approval.