



Pipeline Safety

SKAGITCOUNTYWA.GOV

Skagit County

Planning and
Development Services



Visit us at:

1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

360-416-1320



This information only applies to property within unincorporated Skagit County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

Underground and aboveground pipelines carry natural gas or other hazardous liquids across and throughout our county. While these pipelines are essential to safely providing our homes and businesses with fuel, damaging one of them could result in serious harm to the environment or human life. The energy transportation network of the United States consists of over 2.5 million miles of pipelines. That's enough to circle the earth about 100 times. These pipelines are operated by approximately 3,000 companies, large and small.

Pipelines can be divided into two types: large transmission pipelines that carry fuel across the county, and smaller distribution pipelines that deliver fuel directly to your home or business.

- State law requires you to **call 811** before you dig for almost any home improvement project to avoid damaging buried utilities, including pipelines.
- The "Call Before You Dig" program provides a national phone number to help protect you from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects. Calling before you dig is required by state law. See [RCW 19.122](#).
- Skagit County has adopted [rules](#) that you must follow when applying for permits or land divisions within 100 feet of transmission pipelines.

What should I do if I smell natural gas?

If you smell natural gas and suspect a small natural gas leak in your home, take the following steps:

- Evacuate everyone.
- Do not operate any electrical switches. Sparking could ignite the gas.
- Do not light matches.
- Turn off the gas valve located at the gas meter with a wrench or other suitable tool.
- If the leaking gas ignites, do not try to put out the flames. Dial 911.
- From a phone **outside** your home and away from the gas leak, call Cascade Natural Gas from the toll-free emergency number. **Do NOT use the phone in your house!** Even tiny sparks can ignite gas vapors.

24-hour emergency number for Washington and Oregon: 1-888-522-1130

Do I live near a transmission pipeline?

There are four transmission pipelines cross Skagit County carrying natural gas or other hazardous liquids. To see if a transmission pipeline runs through your property, use our iMap program.

1. Click the map below to open iMap in a new window.
2. On the left side panel, select "Additional Maps"
3. In the Map Categories box, select "Utilities" and then "Pipelines"
4. On the left side, click to search by address (or another method) to find your property.



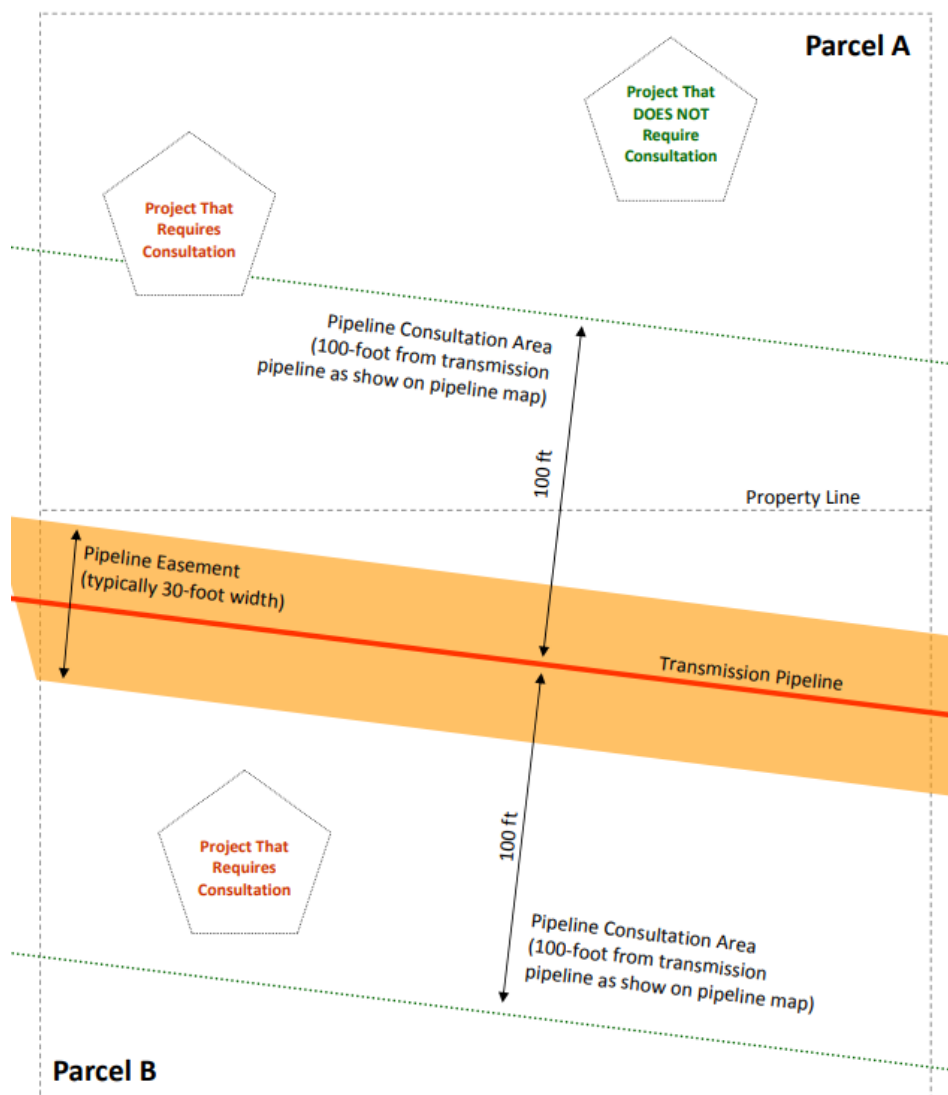
[iMap instructions](#)

If you're within 100 feet of a transmission pipeline in unincorporated Skagit County, you are required to consult with the pipeline operator before the County can issue you a building permit or approve a land division. See [SCC 14.27](#)

Why do I need to meet with a pipeline consultant?

Early consultation is recommended by the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance November 2010 Final Report, sponsored by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's Office of Pipeline Safety, part of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The report recommends local governments require early consultation between property developers and pipeline operators, before a project is approved, to "avoid situations where transmission pipeline operators learn of proposed land use and development projects only after the design is complete or construction begins. In those situations, it is often difficult or impossible to make cost-effective changes that may be needed to enhance public safety and ensure operator access to the pipeline facilities.



How does pipeline consultation work?

After you submit a complete application to the County planning department, the County will e-mail your application to any nearby pipeline operator and request consultation. The pipeline operator will respond directly to you, with a CC to the County.

How do I identify a pipeline?



Being able to recognize a pipeline marker is very important. Below are some examples of what a pipeline marker may look like in your area.

What companies in Skagit County operate pipelines?

- [Williams Northwest Pipeline](#)
- [Olympic Pipe Line Company](#)
- [Kinder Morgan](#)
- [Cascade Natural Gas](#)

How do I report a problem?

If you encounter a problem trying to locate a utility, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission can assist you. You can have underground utilities located, for FREE, by calling 811 or 800-424-5555. You will be asked for the address where the work is taking place, a description of the work being done, the area where the utility lines need to be located, and the date the work will be taking place.

If the locate doesn't happen, is late, inadequate, or inaccurate, please call the commission: 1-888-333-WUTC.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

You may contact us if you have any questions via:

Online: [Ask a Permit Technician](#)

Phone: 360-416-1320

Visit us at: 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon

Remember, asking questions first can save lots of headaches, heartaches, and money!