



Ground Disturbance Authorization

Document Number: RGS09004	Standard	Applies To: Regional Wood Buffalo
Revision Date: 2017/05/05 Revision: 2 Review Cycle: 3 years	Document Owner (Title): Director, NPAS Ops & Mtce	

Summary of Changes

Rev No.	Section Changed	Revisions Made
1	All	New Document
2	Standard	Removed the statement <i>a GDA is not required if you are....performing routine mining and tailings operations activities where a Safe Work Permit is not required</i> and replaced with <i>a GDA is not required if you are....performing ground disturbance activities within areas defined as per APPENDIX 7 – GDA EXEMPTION AREAS.</i>

Scope and Purpose

This procedure applies to all ground disturbance activities performed at Suncor Energy Inc. operating sites in the Wood Buffalo region including: Oil Sands and In Situ, East Tank Farm and the Fort Hills site when fully transitioned to operations.

In the event of an emergency, **STOP WORK IMMEDIATELY** and refer to [RGM12001](#) - Oil Sands and In Situ Emergency Preparedness Plan Manual.

For any ground disturbance activities outside Suncor Energy Inc. operating sites in the Wood Buffalo region, refer to procedure [P302](#) – North American Onshore Ground Disturbance. For any ground disturbance activities outside Suncor Energy Inc. operating sites and within 30 m of Suncor Energy Logistics Corp (SELC) right-of-ways, refer to procedure [700-07](#) – SELC Ground Disturbance and Trenching.

The purpose of this standard is to clarify ground disturbance accountabilities in relation to:

- The legislative requirements referenced within this standard
- The identification, assessment and control of foreseeable hazards
- The process for obtaining approval to seek a Safe Work Permit to perform a ground disturbance

Standard

Ground disturbance is any work operation or activity on or under the ground surface that results in a disturbance or displacement of the soil. For all ground disturbance activities, the [RGP09012](#) - Ground Disturbance Authorization (GDA) Procedure must be followed.

Ground Disturbance Authorizations are **not** required if you are:

- Hand-digging to a depth of no more than 300 millimetres (12 inches) below the ground surface, so long as it does not permanently remove cover over a buried facility.
- Performing routine and minor surface maintenance not exceeding a depth of 300 millimetres (12 inches) below the ground surface.
- Performing ground disturbance activities within areas defined as per [Appendix 7](#) – GDA Exemption Areas.
- Performing ground disturbance activities on road berms or material stockpiles. A GDA does not authorize ground disturbance; a Safe Work Permit (SWP) is required.

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Standard *Continued*

All GDAs require buried facilities to be located and marked. When locate results are non-conclusive due to conditions outside the control mechanisms, additional risk mitigation must be put in place. This must include (but is not limited to) non-mechanical exposing to confirm the existence or absence of buried facilities.

The ground must not be disturbed until Asset Representative(s) and the GDA Issuer have provided authorization to proceed with ground disturbance activities.

GDAs may be valid for up to 30 calendar days from the date buried facilities were located and marked, subject to the following conditions being met:

- Locate marks remain visible, more permanent references have been installed, or the Ground Disturbance Team has exposed the buried facilities and documented their actual location for the entire GDA duration.
- The ground disturber's presence at the site remains evident for the entire GDA duration.

For large or long term projects, it is expected the Job Coordinator will split the ground disturbance project into maximum 30 calendar day sections to better coordinate the provision of buried facilities locates. GDA Extensions are available and can be requested through the [RGP09012](#) - Ground Disturbance Authorization (GDA) Procedure.

All ground disturbances at depths equal to or greater than 1.5 meters are considered to be a confined space. All ground disturbance activities where a worker may be required to enter the disturbed ground and position themselves in a manner where their breathing zone may be below ground grade level require a confined space entry authorization as per [LMS0037A](#) - Confined Space Entry.

For detailed information regarding specific excavation and trenching requirements, consult Part 32 of the Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Code.

Auditing

The GDA Issuer will monitor and audit the Ground Disturbance Authorization process for compliance and report all GDA incidents as per [RGP15001](#) - Incident and SIF Hazard Management.

Accountability

Director, Environment, Health and Safety is accountable to ensure:

- Periodic audit and assessment of this standard.
- Evaluation, maintenance and revision of this standard.

References

Alberta OH&S Code	Part 32 - Excavating and Tunnelling
Appendix 7 – GDA Exemption Areas	Defined areas exempt from RGS09004 and RGP09012
Pipeline Act	Province of Alberta Pipeline Act
Corporate Technical 100 Series Standards	Asset Information Standards
CTS 1506	Corporate Technical Standard – Earthwork
CTS 1508	Excavation, Backfill and Compaction for Structures

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References *Continued*

CTS 1516	Construction of Underground Utilities
Damage Prevention Process	Alberta Common Ground Alliance (ABCGA) buried facility damage prevention process. Includes best practices for locating and marking buried facilities.
LMS0019A	Erection, Identification, and Removal of Flagging
LMS0037A	Confined Space Entry
NIP0019A	Road Closure Authorization
P302	North America Onshore EH&S Practice
RGM02002	Field Level Hazard Assessment
RGM09002	Safe Work Practices Business Process Manual
RGM12001	Oil Sands and In Situ Emergency Preparedness Plan Manual
RGP0004A	Safe Work Permit (SWP)
RGP0005A	Control of Hazardous Energy (CHE)
RGP09012	Ground Disturbance Authorization Administrative Procedure
RGP15001	OEMS Element 15: Incident and Hazard Management
RTS0003A	Civil Construction within Geotechnical Controlled Areas
TDS0012	Working in Proximity to Underground Power Cables
UTP0070A	Working in Proximity to Overhead Power Lines
700-07	SELC Ground Disturbance and Trenching

End of Standard

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