

# UNDERGROUND UTILITIES AND MONUMENTATION

2011 09 12

AOLS members are reminded of their legal obligations when either excavating for, or installing survey monumentation near underground utilities.

Surveyors are expected to protect their employees under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* under the general duty Part III, and by the specific requirement to have “gas, electrical and other services” located and marked prior to excavating by s. 228 of O. Reg. 213/91 under the Act. (Note that “construction” in the Act “includes any work or undertaking in connection with a [construction] project.”)

Furthermore, for oil and gas lines specifically, O. Reg. 210/01 under the *Technical Standards and Safety Act* requires that a person “breaking ground” obtain “the location of any pipeline that may be interfered with” in s. 9(1).

Where underground utilities prevent the setting of a prescribed monument, s. 11 of regulation 525/91 now provides for more monumentation alternatives than in the past. A 30-cm long plastic bar with magnet is now included in the list of standard monuments, and a substantially compliant substitute monument may be used, providing the latter is fully described on the new plan of survey. Additionally, a found monument may be retained to mark a boundary provided it is substantial and durable and accurately defines a point.

Where no acceptable monument can be set to mark a point, a witness monument can be used on a line or production of a line, but no closer than one metre from the point.

## **Alternate Locate Agreements May Help**

Alternate Locate Agreements (ALA's) are written contracts that some utility owners may make with individual survey companies to expedite working near utilities *without* the need for on-site attendance by a locating company, provided certain conditions are met. Companies with such ALA's in place are still expected to obtain a ticket number for their work through the Ontario One-Call service (1-800-400-2255 and [www.on1call.com](http://www.on1call.com)) or appropriate utility contact.