

The purpose of a Hit Kit is to accurately document the relationship between the utility locate marks and the actual point of damage. It is not intended to determine fault or assign blame. Its purpose is to preserve the physical evidence exactly as it existed at the time of the incident so that others can later evaluate the facts.

1. Make the Scene Safe

Stop work if necessary and ensure any immediate hazards have been addressed before beginning documentation. Follow company procedures and the utility owner's emergency response requirements before entering or photographing the scene.

2. Preserve the Scene

Whenever it is safe to do so, leave the excavation exactly as it was at the time of the incident. Do not move equipment, disturb the damaged facility, remove locate marks, or alter the excavation until the scene has been fully documented.

3. Identify the People and Equipment

Record the date, time, location, and one-call ticket number if applicable. Document the names of the foreman or person in charge, the equipment operator, utility representative, damage investigator, and any other key personnel present.

Photograph the excavator, trucks, trailers, and support vehicles from several directions. Include company logos, equipment identification numbers, and license plates whenever possible to document exactly what equipment was present.

4. Set Up the Hit Kit

Place the **DAMAGE** marker immediately adjacent to the damaged facility.

Place the **MARK** marker directly on the corresponding utility locate mark or flag.

Position the measuring ruler between the DAMAGE marker and the MARK marker with the zero end at the point of damage so the measured offset is clearly visible in the photographs.

5. Photograph the Scene

Begin with close-up photographs showing the DAMAGE marker, MARK marker, measuring ruler, and the damaged utility.

Next, take mid-range photographs showing the entire excavation, surrounding locate marks, and nearby equipment.

Finish with wide-angle photographs by walking completely around the excavation and photographing the scene from several different directions. Capture the relationship between the

excavation, equipment, utility markings, and permanent landmarks so the entire incident can be reconstructed later.

Photograph the locate marks approaching and leaving the damage, not just the point of impact. If multiple utilities are marked within the excavation, document those markings as well.

Photograph permanent reference points such as pedestals, valves, transformers, meters, pull boxes, manholes, utility poles, buildings, street signs, fire hydrants, or other identifiable landmarks that establish the exact location of the incident.

Photograph spoil piles, access routes, traffic control devices, barricades, weather conditions if relevant, and any other physical evidence that may assist the investigation.

If company policy permits, record a slow 360-degree video while walking around the entire work area before anything is moved.

6. Review the Documentation

Before leaving the site, review every photograph to ensure the documentation is complete and all critical evidence has been captured. Do not remove the Hit Kit until all photographs and measurements have been completed and the utility owner or investigator has finished documenting the incident.

Remember

The Hit Kit does not determine who was right or wrong. Its purpose is to preserve the facts exactly as they existed when the incident occurred.

The most important rule is simple: Photograph more than you think you'll ever need. Take close-up photographs. Take mid-range photographs. Take wide-angle photographs. Photograph the scene from several directions. Photograph the equipment, the locate marks, the surrounding area, and permanent landmarks. Digital photographs cost nothing to store, but the opportunity to document an unchanged scene exists only once. You can always disregard unnecessary photographs later, but you can never return to capture the ones that were missed.