



Before You Dig Australia (BYDA)

Before You Dig Australia (BYDA) partners with utility providers to protect workers, and the community and prevent damage to assets. Our national service promotes safe digging practices by providing everyone working in and around underground infrastructure with the best possible access to plans and information directly from asset owners of utility services via the free BYDA referral service at www.byda.com.au.

**Not sure where that power cable is to the shed?
Or where that expensive optic fibre cable is?**

People (and some kelpies) in rural areas face many unique challenges – finding and avoiding buried services in and around a rural property is one of them. No one wants to get electrocuted, cut their neighbour's phone off, or get a hefty repair bill from a utility that already has a fair bit of your cash – getting Before You Dig information is just the first step.

Getting FREE plans is a free and simple process:

- Online via our website: www.byda.com.au
- Via the BYDA iPhone and Android mobile apps

Safety is a fundamental aspect of any excavation project, so the BYDA service should always be the first point of contact.

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The 5Ps of Safe Excavation

Plan

Plan by lodging your BYDA enquiry at least one business day before your project begins, and ensure you have the correct information required to carry out a safe project.

Prepare

Prepare by reviewing the utility plans and contacting the asset owners if you need assistance. Look for on-site asset clues such as pit lids, marker posts and electricity, gas or water meters. Engage a Certified Locator who can assist you in locating assets electronically before potholing.

Pothole

Establish the exact location of all underground infrastructure(s), if permitted, by hand digging, hydro vacuum extraction or using the asset owner's stated method as specified on the plans or information pack.

Protect

Protecting the exposed infrastructure is the excavator's responsibility if potholing has occurred. Communicate to all working on-site, erect barriers and mark the location of the exposed infrastructure.

Proceed

You should only proceed with your excavation work after planning, preparing, potholing (unless prohibited), and having protective measures in place.



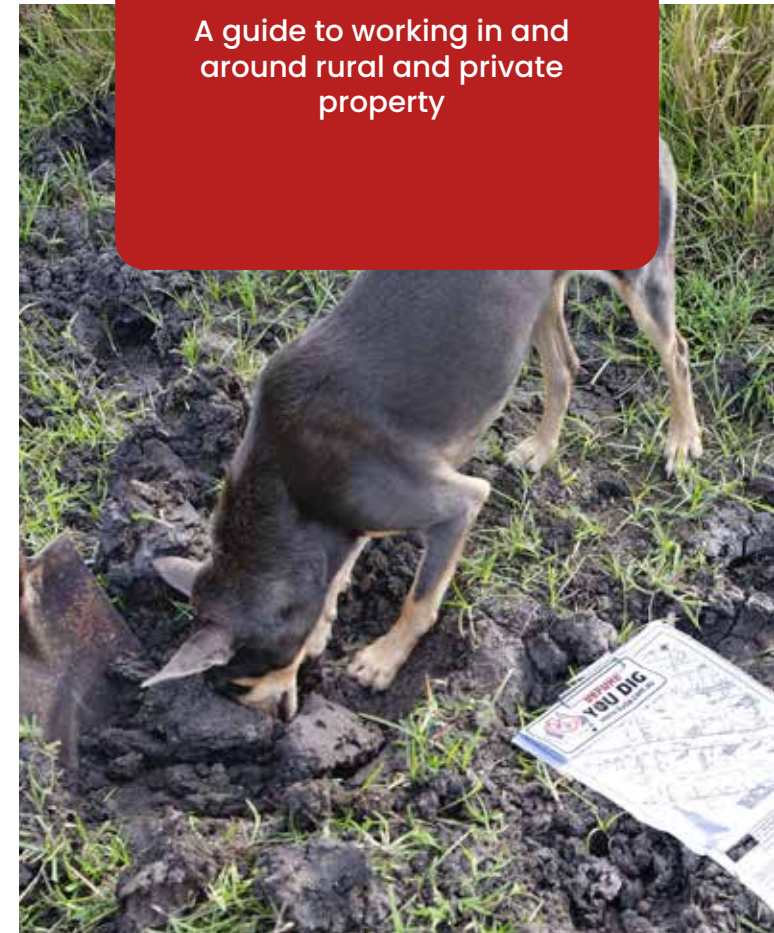
Zero Damage - Zero Harm



Zero Damage - Zero Harm

KNOW WHAT'S BELOW

A guide to working in and around rural and private property



Rural and Private Property FAQs



Do I need to do a BYDA search on private property?

Yes – it is easy to do, and it's free. Always check with BYDA regardless of the location of the proposed works. In rural areas, a significant number of communications cables (and other services) are installed inside rural private property and may not be obvious. Property owners should know the location of services on their property regardless of who owns or installed them, especially if you have just purchased a property. BYDA also recommends engaging a Certified Locator to assist in locating these assets and any other services that may exist. Once services have been located, you can record them on your property plans for future reference.

Will BYDA plans show all the services on my property and all the existing services in the area?

Not necessarily. Services on private property can either be domestic (terminate within the property, e.g., irrigation or power to a shed) or a network passing through the property (For example, an optic fibre cable or gas main running across a paddock or inside the fence line). Domestic services installed privately will not be shown on BYDA plans. In contrast, network services generally are shown. Please remember that not all asset owners are BYDA members. Registered members who have assets in your project area will be listed on the BYDA confirmation sheet you receive when you lodge an enquiry.

Lodging a free BYDA enquiry may indicate the presence of a hidden service that you didn't know existed.

Are BYDA plans accurate?

No – Asset owner records only indicate the presence of an asset. Here are reasons why asset owners cannot supply exact measurements or depths and alignments:

1. Some assets may have been installed over 20 years ago, and the ground profile could have changed since installation, rendering the measurements inaccurate.
2. Misrepresentation of property boundaries – fences may not be in the correct alignment. Asset owners do not have ongoing visibility or control of the environment around their assets. Relying on old measurements being exact (which people tend to do) is very risky.
3. The asset owner may not have done the actual installation – builders, contractors, or property owners could have installed domestic connections.

It is reasonable to expect property owners to know what is on their property and where. Utilities do not usually install on private property without the property owner's knowledge or permission. It is advisable to keep records of services on private property, and these records can be passed on when a property changes hands.

Why am I responsible for finding the service(s) on my property when I don't own them?

As the 'disturber', if you plan to dig, you have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to avoid damaging assets or creating dangerous situations for yourself or others.

On the flip side, asset owners also have a responsibility and duty of care to keep and provide reasonable records of their assets. Asset owners should be able to provide information and advice on their assets – especially if it passes through your property. If it is a high-risk asset, it is expected they would want to protect their asset as well as prevent injury. For example, if an asset owner's marker posts are missing, it would be reasonable to expect assistance from the asset owner to help find their asset. Contact details will be on your BYDA confirmation sheet or the information sent to you by the asset owner.

What about those who aren't members of BYDA?

We only supply plans and information from registered members. Unfortunately, there is no legal requirement for owners of underground services to be BYDA members. Our goal is to have all asset owners register with the BYDA service to share plans and information with users. To obtain non-member plans & information, you need to contact them directly.

Are councils members of BYDA?

Almost all councils have infrastructure in public places, especially in built-up areas. These assets may include power for street lighting, decorative lighting, and electric BBQs in parks. Many councils have communication cables as well. Inadvertently striking any of these assets could be dangerous and expensive. If your local council is not a BYDA member, you will need to check if there is any likelihood of their assets being present in your project area.

I have services running through my property that shouldn't be there – can I get them removed?

You could get them relocated off your property, but usually, the asset owner will require you to pay the relocation costs – unless you can successfully argue that they installed it without due process. Utilities do not usually install on private property without following due process, which includes formally notifying the property owner. Quite often, that information is not passed on to subsequent owners. Just because it's on your property doesn't necessarily mean it was installed illegally.

Additional Resources:

Best Practices Guide



Find a Certified Locator



Look Up and Live



www.byda.com.au