

# An Excavators Guide to Understanding the Marks



Know what's **below.**  
**Call** before you dig.



Oklahoma One-Call System, Inc. is dedicated to keeping Oklahomans safe while digging. One of the best ways to stay safe while digging is to be educated on all aspects of the process. We have put together a quick reference guide to help you understand what the locate marks mean and how to know where the best place to dig is.

## Signs of Underground Facilities:



- Manhole Lids
- Fire Hydrants
- Gas Meters



- Warning Markers
- Storm Drains
- Water Valves



- Power Pads
- Handholds
- Pedestals



- Dip Poles
- Cross Boxes
- Pavement Patches

- Slick Cabinets
- Depressed or Visible Trench Lines
- Stub Ups

# Uniform Color Code



The following APWA uniform color code is recommended to be adopted as the uniform color code for marking excavation sites and underground facilities in conflict with an excavation. This recommendation is not intended to preempt any existing state requirement that specifies other colors.

**White**... Proposed Excavation

**Pink**... Temporary Survey Markings

**Red**... Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables

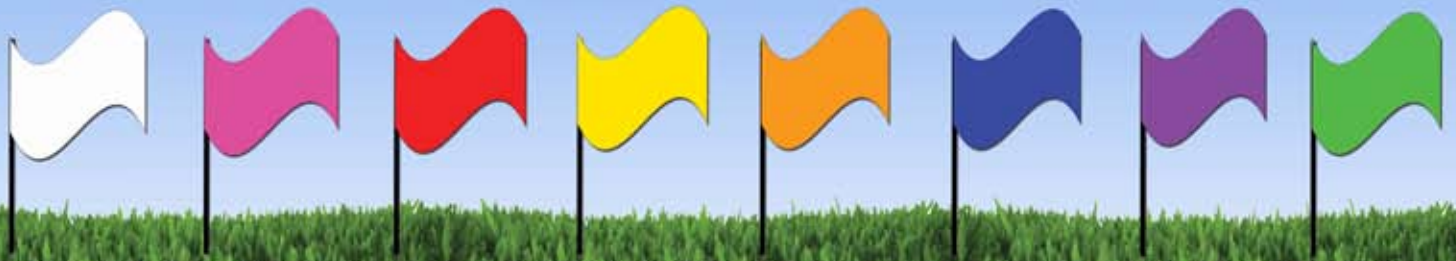
**Yellow**... Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials

**Orange**... Communication, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cables or Conduit

**Blue**... Potable Water

**Purple**... Reclaimed Water, Irrigation and Slurry Lines

**Green**... Sewer and Drain Lines

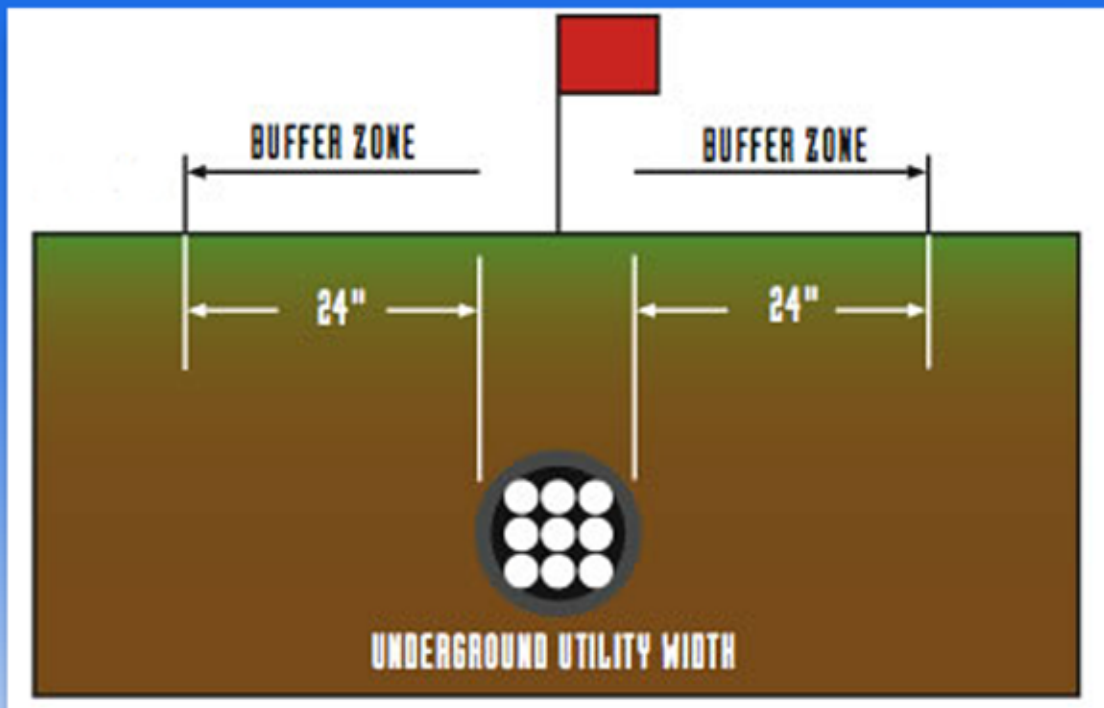


# Tolerance Zone

Did you know that the Oklahoma Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Act includes a tolerance zone for excavation? It says "...the approximate location of the underground facilities shall be defined as a strip of land two (2) feet on either side of such underground facility."

So what does that mean to you? This means that since the markings on the ground show the approximate location of the underground facilities you should use extra caution when you are within 24" of the marks. In fact, the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) has published Best Practices 4.0 which includes a statement about excavating within the tolerance zone.

It says: When excavation is to take place within the specified tolerance zone, the excavator exercises such reasonable care as may be necessary for the protection of any underground facility in or near the excavation area. Methods to consider, based on certain climate or geographical conditions, include: hand digging when practical (pot holing), soft digging, vacuum excavation methods, pneumatic hand tools, other mechanical methods with the approval of the facility owner/operator, or other technical methods that may be developed.



For example, if you have determined that a gas line is near your dig site you should first hand dig near the marks so that you can determine the exact location of that gas line prior to digging with a large piece of excavation equipment. But how do you know where to stop hand digging? First, determine what size line is under those flags and paint. If you have a 24" gas line, you will need to add the 24" to either side of that line to find your tolerance zone. In this case your tolerance zone would be a total of 72 inches.

# Marking Types

Direct Buried Lines will have a single mark usually about 2 inches X 12 inches and spaced about every three paces or about 10 feet.



Fiber conduits will be marked with a single stripe on either side of the system and a dot or diamond in the center.

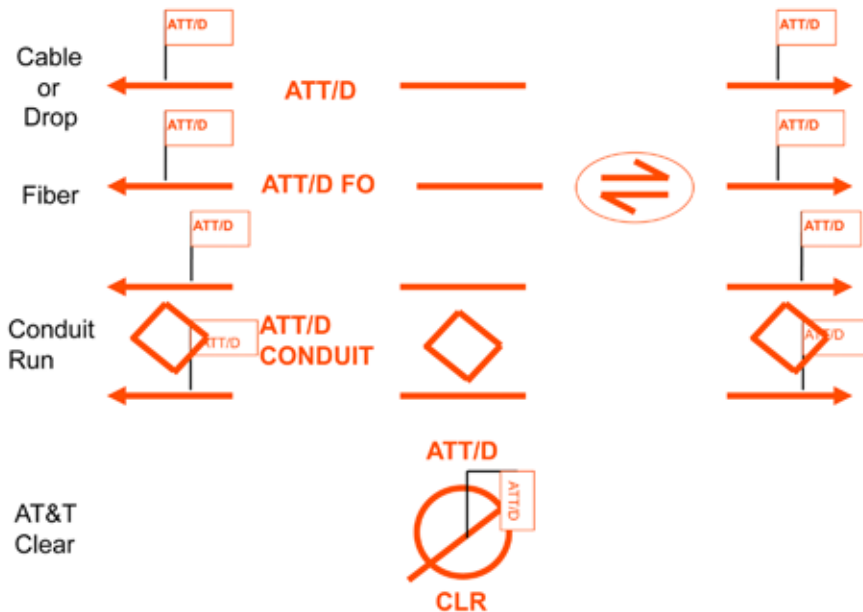
Fiber lines not in conduit are marked by a circle with two backwards sevens in it.



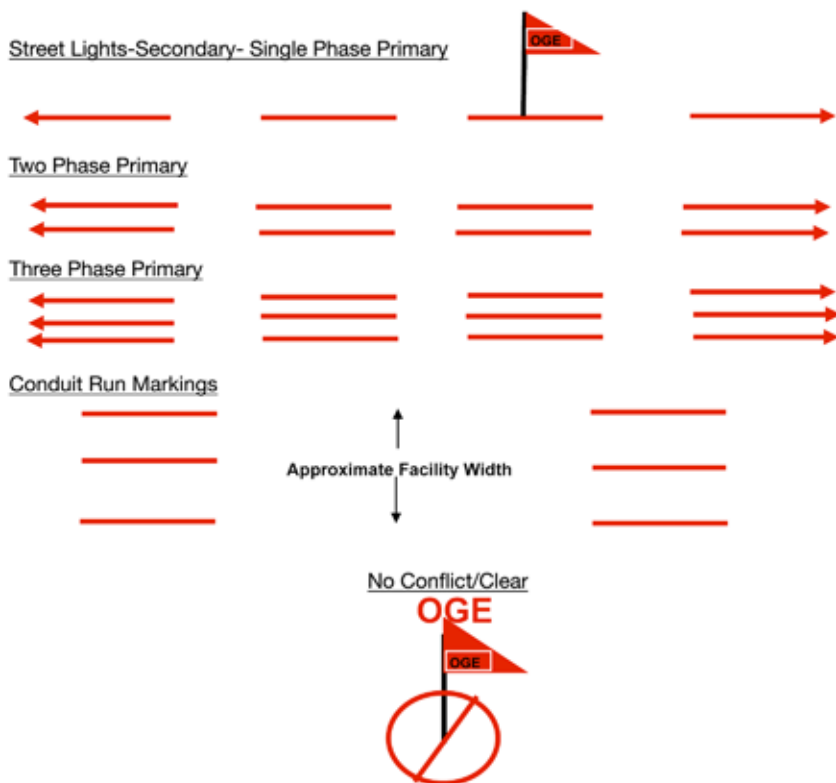
Note: These marks are generally reflective of communication companies in Oklahoma and do not necessarily reflect the marks of all facility companies.

# Example Marks

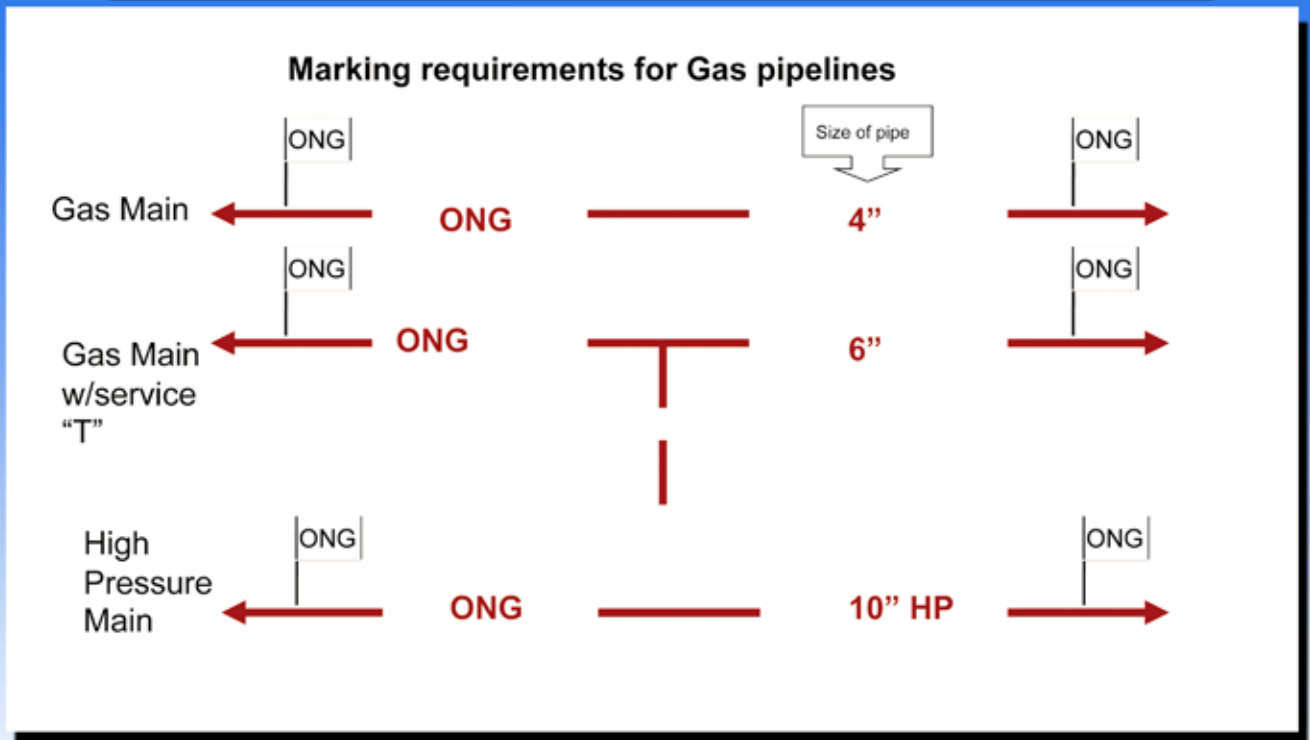
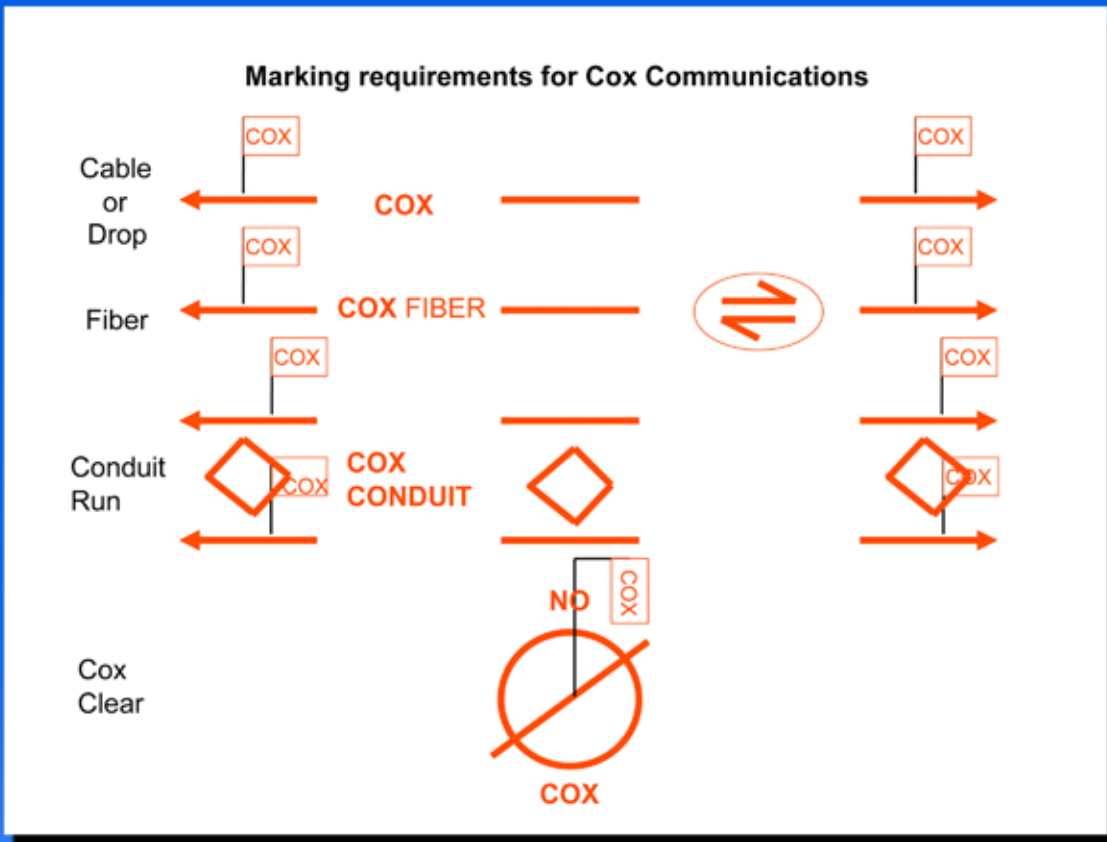
## Marking requirements for AT&T



## OGE Standard Markings



# Example Marks



These marks are reflective of SM&P Utility Resources, Inc. and the companies they locate facilities for and may not be true for all facility companies in the state of Oklahoma.

# All Clear

Examples of “All Clear” marks. These will appear when there are no underground facilities in the area requested to be located for each company.



No Cox



No At&T



No OGE

# All Clear



No Cox

No At&T

No OGE



# Private Lines

One thing to remember is that Call Okie only notifies companies who have registered facility lines in your area. This means that any private lines such as sprinkler systems, underground pool utilities, and any lines that are used solely for private use, are not located.

To locate these lines, look in your local yellow pages for a private line locating service.



# Questions?

If there is ever any question about the line marking or the facility locating process please contact Oklahoma One-Call System, Inc. immediately before proceeding to dig. Call Okie can be used as a great resource for any questions and also has the numbers for the facility owners that were notified for your locate.

## To contact Call Okie:

Dial  
811 or  
1-800-522-6543

or visit  
[www.callokie.com](http://www.callokie.com)

