

Health, Safety and Environment Bulletin

Hydro vacuum excavation safety

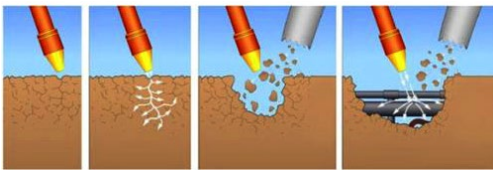
What is hydro vacuum excavation?

Hydro vacuum excavation uses high pressure water to cut and liquefy the soil, while simultaneously using a high volume vacuum to remove the soil from the excavation.

It is an alternative to standard digging - especially when non-destructive digging is required (e.g. for excavating around power, water and sewer assets to reduce the likelihood of damages and unsafe situations).

Tips for making hydro vacuum excavation safer

Safety is our priority. Follow the below tips to protect our people and avoid damage to vital assets.



- Only trained workers are to operate hydro vacuum equipment.
- Know what is under the ground before starting – always contact **Before You Dig Australia** and follow prompts on www.byda.com.au.
- Follow the '**Five Ps of Safe Excavation**': Plan
- Prepare
- Pothole
- Protect
- Proceed.
- Always wear the correct personal protective clothing: high-visibility, long sleeved clothing (neck to wrist to ankle), safety boots, hard hat, gloves (insulated gloves when working around electrical cables), safety glasses and hearing protection.
- Consider using non-conductive rubber matting under foot when working near electrical cables.

- Earth the hydro vacuum truck at every opportunity to reduce static build up when working around underground electrical cables.
- Use a non-conductive spray gun with all safety guards in place.
- Choose a nozzle that best suits the task at hand. Use 'turbo' type nozzles, not 'pencil/needle' type nozzles.
- Point the spray nozzle away from cables and pipes.
- Be careful to avoid touching electrical cables with the spray gun, especially if there is a pool of water.
- Remain standing when hydro excavating to limit potential exposure to electrical shocks.
- Avoid touching or brushing up against cables or apparatus.

What does it mean for me?

When using hydro vacuum equipment:

- Maintain equipment as per manufacturer's specifications.
- Wear appropriate personal protective clothing.
- Identify the hazards, assess and control the risks prior conducting works.
- Follow Power and Water access to apparatus standard and procedures.
- [Report any hazards and incidents to Power and Water.](#)

More information

Please refer to:

- Power and Water Access to Apparatus Management Standard (CONTROL0219)
- Power and Water Access to Electricity and Generation Apparatus Procedure (CONTROL0471)
- Code of Practice '[Excavation Works](#)'
- [Dial Before You Dig Australia website](#)

Alternatively, you can contact your contract manager or the [Health, Safety and Environment team](#).

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WORKING TOWARDS OUR GOAL OF
ZERO HARM

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PowerWater