



February 10, 2010

Dear Business Owner/Manager:

On February 1, 2010, a sewer cleaning contractor was injured and a home in St. Paul was destroyed from a natural gas-fueled fire stemming from a natural gas leak caused by the contractor's perforation of a natural gas main that intersected the sewer lateral. We take this issue very seriously and are working with the Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety and Minnesota Department of Public Safety to address concerns.

We believe sewer/natural gas main conflicts in our service area are rare. However, in cases where our natural gas mains have been moved from their original location (for example, due to road expansions or sewer separation projects) it is possible that our natural gas mains inadvertently intersected some sewer laterals. As long as a natural gas main intersecting a sewer lateral is not penetrated, it poses no safety hazard. However, power equipment used to unclog sewer laterals can penetrate the natural gas main if the clog is located in the vicinity of the natural gas main (typically under the boulevard or sidewalk).

If you are working on a sewer lateral and find that the blockage is in the vicinity of the boulevard or sidewalk, or an area where utilities cross, we recommend using camera equipment to help identify if there are utilities intersecting the sewer lateral. If a natural gas main is found to be intersecting a sewer lateral, you should contact the local natural gas utility before ANYONE attempts to clear the lateral. If you do not have camera equipment and/or cannot determine whether a natural gas main is intersecting the sewer lateral, you should contact the local natural gas utility before ANYONE attempts to clear the lateral. In Xcel Energy's service territory, you can call our dedicated 24-hour Gas Emergency/Dispatch number at 1-800-895-2999.

As always, we are committed to your safety and we thank you for your cooperation.