



Pipeline rights-of-way: What you need to know

A pipeline right-of-way (ROW) is a strip of land of varying widths that may contain one or more pipelines. To deliver critically needed natural gas via our network, Enbridge must at times cross private and public lands.

The existence of a ROW allows our workers access for construction, operations, inspection, maintenance, testing or in an emergency. It also identifies an area where certain activities are prohibited to protect public safety and the integrity of the pipeline.

Enbridge obtains property interests from a landowner in a legal document called a Grant of Easement. While this provides us with the necessary rights to build, operate and maintain pipeline facilities authorized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the actual ownership of the property remains with the landowner.

After the landowner and our company agree to a compensation amount, the landowner signs the easement document, which is then placed on record at the local registry of deeds. The rights and responsibilities described in the document “run with the land” remain effective with future owners.

The Grant of Easement generally describes the width of the permanent right-of-way and any temporary workspace that was acquired for the project. The Grant of Easement also typically references a plan, which depicts the location of the permanent right-of-way and temporary workspace with respect to property boundaries.

A permanent ROW is typically 50 feet wide, and our access to this property is limited to the existing public ways and any private access ways identified and acquired for the project.

Temporary workspace will be needed adjacent to and along the permanent ROW when a pipeline is built or expanded. We'll work with all directly affected landowners to negotiate fair compensation for the permanent ROW and temporary workspace. Our right to use the temporary workspace areas typically expires after the proposed permanent and temporary right-of-way is restored as close as possible to the original contours. The temporary workspace outside of the permanent right-of-way will return to its original state. The entire work area will be restored in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local permits.

Because the pipeline is buried, a landowner may resume use of the surface of the pipeline right-of-way after construction and restoration, subject to some limitations.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why does Enbridge maintain clear rights-of-way?

A: This is necessary to ensure that Enbridge's operations remain as safe as possible to protect landowners, the public and the pipeline facilities. We need unrestricted entry and access to all of our facilities at all times for regular maintenance or during emergency situations.

A clear right-of-way provides easy identification and monitoring of pipeline facilities. This is imperative in preventing third-party damage. Trees and large shrubs, for example, obstruct the view for our regular foot patrols and aerial inspections, while tree roots create a danger to the coating that protects the pipeline from corrosion.

Q: What's an encroachment?

A: An encroachment is anything that's placed within the easement that may interfere with Enbridge's ability to use the easement. In most cases, the property owner may continue activities that do not pose a problem to the long-term integrity of the pipeline.

Examples of encroachments that interfere with our use of the easement and are not allowed include buildings, houses, garages, excess vegetation, mobile homes, trailers, sheds, trees, poles, decks, patios, swimming pools or other structures that obstruct or impede access to or along the ROW.

Utilities, driveways, streets, roads, fences and approved parking lots generally may be placed across the pipeline easement provided they meet certain criteria required to protect the pipeline.

Our ROW agents can provide landowners with that criteria—and please involve our agents early on if you are planning improvements near or across our pipelines to find out what's required.

Q: What are the markers along the right-of-way?

A: We use pipeline markers along the right-of-way for easy recognition of the presence of underground pipelines. The markers are typically located in a "line of sight" manner within the rights-of-way, along streets and at road and railroad crossings.

The markers provide helpful information about what each pipeline transports, who operates the pipeline, and how to contact the pipeline company. Markers indicate the general location of buried pipelines only, and should never be used as a reference for the exact location of a pipeline.

Q: Who should I call to locate the pipeline on my property?

A: Before digging on or near the right-of-way, a landowner should contact the local one-call center by dialing 811 **at least 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) prior to beginning any activities.** In the case of activity near Enbridge's pipelines, we send personnel to mark the location of the facilities and have company employees on-site when the excavation occurs.

Q: Where can I find easements that affect my property?

A: An easement is the legal right of a third-party to use a portion of property for a specific and limited purpose. If the property is sold, the rights and responsibilities under the Grant of Easement stay with the property and remain in effect with the new owner of the property.

Depending upon the laws of a particular state, the local registry of deeds, court house or county property records department keeps a record and a copy of easement agreements. If an easement was granted by a prior owner, a reference to the easement also may be found in the deed conveying the property to a new owner, or may be referenced in a title search performed on the property or a title insurance policy issued to the owner or mortgage company when the property was purchased.

If this is a new easement, Enbridge will provide the landowner with a copy after it is executed and will record that document in the registry of deeds.