

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**NOTICE OF PENALTIES INCURRED AND DUE  
FOR VIOLATIONS OF LAWS AND RULES**

PENALTY ASSESSMENT: DG-260192

PENALTY AMOUNT: \$7,000

Investigation # 9282

EMAIL SERVICE

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**YOU MUST RESPOND WITHIN 15 DAYS OF THIS NOTICE**

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) believes that Sound Drilling, LLC (Sound Drilling or Company) violated the following Revised Codes of Washington (RCW):

- RCW 19.122.030(1)(a), three times, for failing to mark the boundary of the excavation area with white lining, or when necessary, white pin flags, applied on the ground of the worksite prior to the scheduled commencement of excavation.
- RCW 19.122.030(2), four times, for failing to provide notice to a one-number locator service not less than two full business days and not more than 10 full business days before the scheduled work-to-begin date.

RCW 19.122.055(3) states, in part, that any excavators who violate any provision of this chapter but does not cause damage to an underground gas facility are subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000 for each violation.

On February 12, 2026, Commission staff (Staff) received complaint #38 filed by Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (CNGC or Complainant) alleging Sound Drilling violated RCW 19.122.030(1)(a) three times and RCW 19.122.030(2) four times. Staff conducted an investigation that included reviewing the complaint report, photographs, the One Call Center database, communication between CNGC and Sound drilling, and Staff emails with CNGC and Sound Drilling. The investigation identified a natural gas event that involved Sound Drilling.

The Commission reviewed findings and recommendations made by Staff and hereby notifies you that it is assessing a \$7,000 penalty (Penalty Assessment) against you on the following grounds:

1. **Alleged Violation 1:**

On September 8, 2025, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #25390798 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. On September 10, 2025, CNGC

responded to the locate request and found that Sound Drilling failed to white-line the area to be excavated.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(1)(a), which states, in part, that an excavator must mark the boundary of the excavation area with white lining, or, when necessary, white pin flags applied on the ground at the worksite, then provide notice of the scheduled commencement of excavation to all facility operators through a one-number locator service.

On September 10, 2025, CNGC responded to locate ticket #25390798 and found that the area to be excavated had not been marked with white paint. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called in locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates, and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #25390798 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on September 8, 2025, with a work-to-begin date of September 17, 2025. The ticket's status history confirms that the locate was completed on September 10, 2025.

2. **Alleged Violation 2:**

On October 19, 2025, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #25457862 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. This was an updated request to ticket #25390798. On October 20, 2025, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that Sound Drilling had not begun any excavation when CNGC responded to this updated ticket locate request.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(2), which states, in part, that an excavator must provide notice to a one-number locator service not less than two full business days and not more than 10 full business days before the scheduled work-to-begin date, unless otherwise agreed by the excavator and facility operators in writing.

On October 20, 2026, CNGC responded to this updated locate request and found that the Company had not begun excavation. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called in locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its

concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #25457862 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on October 19, 2025, with a work-to-begin date of October 23, 2025. The ticket's status history confirms that the locate was completed on October 20, 2025.

3. **Alleged Violation 3:**

On November 25, 2025, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #25508403 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. This was an updated request to ticket #25457862. On November 25, 2025, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that Sound Drilling had not begun any excavation.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(2), which states, in part, that an excavator must provide notice to a one-number locator service not less than two full business days and not more than 10 full business days before the scheduled work-to-begin date, unless otherwise agreed by the excavator and facility operators in writing.

On November 25, 2025, CNGC responded to this updated locate request and found that the Company had not begun excavation. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called in locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates, and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #25508403 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on November 25, 2025, with a work-to-begin date of December 2, 2025. The ticket's status history confirms that the locate was completed on November 25, 2025.

4. **Alleged Violation 4:**

On January 5, 2026, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #26001759 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. This was an updated request to ticket #25508403. On January 7, 2026, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that Sound Drilling failed to white-line the area to be excavated.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(1)(a), which states, in part, that an excavator must mark the boundary of the excavation area with white lining, or, when necessary, white pin flags applied on the ground at the worksite, then provide notice of the

scheduled commencement of excavation to all facility operators through a one-number locator service.

On January 7, 2026, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that the Company had not white-lined the area to be excavated. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called in locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates, and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #26001759 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on January 5, 2026, with a work-to-begin date of January 8, 2026. The ticket's status history confirms that the locate was completed on January 7, 2026.

5. **Alleged Violation 5:**

On January 5, 2026, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #26001759 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. This was an updated request to ticket #25508403. On January 7, 2026, CNGC responded to the updated ticket request and found that Sound Drilling had not begun any excavation.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(2), which states, in part, that an excavator must provide notice to a one-number locator service not less than two full business days and not more than 10 full business days before the scheduled work-to-begin date, unless otherwise agreed by the excavator and facility operators in writing.

On January 7, 2026, CNGC responded to this updated locate request and found that the Company had not begun excavation. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called in locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates, and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #26001759 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on January 5, 2026, with a work-to-begin date of January 8, 2026. The ticket's status history confirms that the locate was completed on January 7, 2026.

**6. Alleged Violation 6:**

On February 12, 2026, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #26058974 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. This was an updated request to ticket #26001759. On February 12, 2026, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that Sound Drilling failed to white-line the area to be excavated.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(1)(a), which states, in part, that an excavator must mark the boundary of the excavation area with white lining, or, when necessary, white pin flags applied on the ground at the worksite, then provide notice of the scheduled commencement of excavation to all facility operators through a one-number locator service.

On February 12, 2026, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that the Company had not white-lined the area to be excavated. Locate ticket #26058974 was the fourth update of the original ticket #25390798. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called in locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates, and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #26058974 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on February 12, 2026, with a work-to-begin date of February 18, 2026. The ticket's status history confirms that the locate was completed on February 12, 2026.

**7. Alleged Violation 7:**

On February 12, 2026, Sound Drilling requested locate ticket #26058974 for excavation at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington. This was an updated request to ticket #26058974. February 12, 2026, CNGC responded to the updated locate request and found that Sound Drilling had not begun any excavation.

**Analysis:**

The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.030(2), which states, in part, that an excavator must provide notice to a one-number locator service not less than two full business days and not more than 10 full business days before the scheduled work-to-begin date, unless otherwise agreed by the excavator and facility operators in writing.

On February 12, 2026, CNGC responded to this updated locate request and found that the Company had not begun excavation. Locate ticket #26058974 was the fourth update of the original ticket #25390798. CNGC provided photographs documenting the lack of white lining and no work being conducted, but the date the pictures were taken is unknown.

The complaint documented that Sound Drilling called to locate requests multiple times without work ever commencing. CNGC noted that some tickets had upwards of five updates, and the Company has not been receptive to CNGC's communications regarding its concerns. CNGC provided a supplemental response indicating that the original ticket #25390798 was updated four times.

Staff searched the Washington One Call Center database and confirmed locate ticket #26058974 was requested by Sound Drilling for 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, Washington, on February 12, 2026, with a work-to-begin date of March 29, 2026. The ticket's status history confirms that the locates were completed on February 12, 2026.

The Commission considered the following factors in determining the appropriate penalty amount for the violations:

1. **How serious or harmful the violations are to the public.**  
These incidents could have been significantly more harmful to Sound Drilling workers, utility technicians, nearby homeowners, and the public, and they could have resulted in severe injury and/or loss of property.
2. **Whether the violations were intentional.**  
This violation appears to be due to negligence by Sound Drilling rather than a lack of knowledge regarding Washington State's dig law. Since March 24, 2025, Sound Drilling has submitted 4,459 requests to locate underground facilities in Washington. This demonstrates the Companies knowledge of the requirements and its responsibility to comply with the Dig Law.
3. **Whether the company self-reported the violations.**  
Sound Drilling was not required to self-report the violation as no damage occurred. The Commission became aware of the violations when CNGC filed a complaint with the Commission. Pursuant to RCW 19.122.053(1), only damage events must be reported to the Commission.
4. **The likelihood of recurrence.**  
The likelihood of recurrence depends on the Company's actions going forward and its willingness to comply the Washington State's dig law.
5. **The Company's previous violations and penalties.**
  - **Warning Letter**
    - On June 5, 2023, the Commission mailed Alleged Violation of Washington Dig Law letters to Sound Drilling. The letter included detailed information about Washington State's Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act, requirements for submitting utility locate requests before excavating, and the possibility of penalties for each violation. The Commission mailed the letter after receiving a report of damage caused by Sound Drilling on March 13, 2023, that occurred because the Company failed to submit a request to locate underground utilities before excavating.

The Commission has considered these factors and determined that it should penalize Sound Drilling as follows:

- **First Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(1)(a) that occurred on September 10, 2025, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.
- **Second Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(2) that occurred on October 20, 2025, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.
- **Third Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(2) that occurred on November 25, 2025, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.
- **Fourth Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(1)(a) that occurred on January 7, 2026, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.
- **Fifth Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(2) that occurred on January 7, 2026, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.
- **Sixth Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(1)(a) that occurred on February 12, 2026, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.
- **Seventh Violation:** \$1,000 penalty for one violation of RCW 19.122.030(2) that occurred on February 12, 2026, at 2433 East Blackburn Road, Mount Vernon, WA.

The total penalty amount is \$7,000 for the three violations of RCW 19.122.030(1)(a) and four violations of RCW 19.122.030(2) with an offer to suspend a \$5,600 portion of the penalty for 90 days, then waive it, subject to the conditions that:

- 1) Company management and field crew responsible for excavation must complete NUCA Dig Safe Training (<https://utc-9183.quickbase.com/db/bpkt6vndh>) within 90 days of service of this Penalty Assessment; and
- 2) The Company must submit documentation of training completion to the Commission's web portal at <https://efiling.utc.wa.gov/Form>.

Further violation of chapter 19.122 RCW will result in progressive penalty assessment up to maximum allowable by law.

These facts, if proven at a hearing and not rebutted or explained, are sufficient to support the Penalty Assessment.

Your penalty is due and payable now. If you believe the violations did not occur, you may deny committing the violations and contest the penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. Or, if there is a reason for the violations that you believe should excuse you from the penalty, you may ask for mitigation (reduction) of the penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for a hearing only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any request to contest the violations, or for mitigation of the penalty must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that request. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request. See RCW 81.04.405.

If you properly present your request for a hearing and the Commission grants that request, the Commission will review the evidence supporting your dispute of the violations or application for mitigation in a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judge will consider the evidence and will notify you of their decision.

**You must act within 15 days after receiving this Penalty Assessment** to do one of the following:

- Pay the \$7,000 penalty amount due; or
- Pay \$1,400 and notify the Commission that you accept the offer to suspend a \$5,600 portion of the penalty amount for 90 days, and then waive it, subject to the following conditions:
  - Company management and field crew responsible for excavation must complete NUCA Dig Safe Training (<https://utc-9183.quickbase.com/db/bpkt6vndh>) within 90 days of service of this Penalty Assessment; and
  - The Company must submit documentation of training completion (Certificate) to the Commission. (See attached **NUCA Dig Safe Training Verification Record**); or
- Contest the occurrence of the violations; or
- Admit the violations but request mitigation of the penalty amount.

Please indicate your selection on the enclosed form and submit it electronically through the Commission's web portal at <https://efiling.utc.wa.gov/Form> **within FIFTEEN (15) days** after you receive this Penalty Assessment. If you are unable to use the web portal, you may submit it via email to [records@utc.wa.gov](mailto:records@utc.wa.gov). If you are unable to submit the form electronically, you may send a paper copy to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, PO Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250.

If you wish to make your payment online, please use this link: [Make a Payment Now \(wa.gov\)](#).<sup>1</sup>

**If you do not act within 15 days**, the Commission may refer this matter to the Office of the Attorney General for collection.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective April 14, 2026.

/s/ Connor Thompson  
CONNOR THOMPSON  
Director, Administrative Law Division

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.utc.wa.gov/documents-and-proceedings/online-payments/make-payment-now>.

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**  
PENALTY ASSESSMENT DG-260192 Investigation # 9282

**PLEASE NOTE:** You must complete and sign this document and send it to the Commission within 15 days after you receive the Penalty Assessment. Use additional paper if needed.

I have read and understand RCW 9A.72.020 (printed below), which states that making false statements under oath is a class B felony. I am over the age of 18, competent to testify to the matters set forth below, and I have personal knowledge of those matters. I hereby make, under oath, the following statements:

- [ ] 1. **Payment of penalty.** I admit that the violations occurred:  
     [ ] Enclose \$7,000 in payment of the penalty.  
     OR [ ] Attest that I have paid the penalty through the Commission's payment portal.
- [ ] 2. **Accept conditions.** I admit that the violations occurred and enclose \$1,400 toward the payment of the penalty. I also accept the Commission's offer to suspend for 90 days, and ultimately waive, the remaining \$5,600 penalty amount subject to the following conditions:
- Company management and field crew responsible for excavation at the time of the incident, must complete NUCA Dig Safe training (<https://utc-9183.quickbase.com/db/bpkt6vndh>) within 90 days of service of this Penalty Assessment; and
  - The Company must submit documentation of training completion (Certificate) to the Commission. (See attached **NUCA Dig Safe Training Verification Record**).
- [ ] 3. **Contest the violations.** I believe that the alleged violations did not occur for the reasons I describe below (**if you do not include reasons supporting your contest here, your request will be denied**):
- [ ] a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision.
- OR [ ] b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.
- [ ] 4. **Request mitigation.** I admit the violations, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below (**if you do not include reasons supporting your application here, your request will be denied**):
- [ ] a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision.
- OR [ ] b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Washington that the foregoing, including information I have presented on any attachments, is true and correct.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ [Month/Day/Year], at \_\_\_\_\_ [City, State]

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Respondent (Company) – please print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

RCW 9A.72.020 “Perjury in the first degree.”

- (1) A person is guilty of perjury in the first degree if in any official proceeding he or she makes a materially false statement which he or she knows to be false under an oath required or authorized by law.
- (2) Knowledge of the materiality of the statement is not an element of this crime, and the actor's mistaken belief that his or her statement was not material is not a defense to a prosecution under this section.
- (3) Perjury in the first degree is a class B felony.