

Service Date: May 22, 2024

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PENALTIES INCURRED AND DUE
FOR VIOLATIONS OF LAWS AND RULESReceived
Records Management
Jun 5, 2024PENALTY ASSESSMENT: DG-240367
PENALTY AMOUNT: \$1,000
Investigation # 8872

EMAIL SERVICE

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YOU MUST RESPOND WITHIN 15 DAYS OF THIS NOTICE

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) believes that Bertin's Pools and Landscaping, LLC (Bertin's Pools or Company) violated Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 19.122.055(1)(a) by failing to notify the one-number locate service and causing damage to an underground gas facility.

RCW 19.122.055(1)(a) states, in part, that excavators who fail to notify a one-number locator service and cause damage to an underground gas facility are subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each violation.

Commission staff (Staff) conducted an investigation that included reviewing damage reports, investigation reports, the One Call Center database, and communications with the Company. The documents reviewed identified a natural gas event that involved Bertin's Pools damaging a natural gas facility while excavating without a valid locate ticket.

The Commission reviewed findings and recommendations made by Staff and hereby notifies you that it is assessing a \$1,000 penalty (Penalty Assessment) against you on the following grounds:

- 1. Alleged Violation:**
On July 28, 2023, Bertin's Pools was excavating at 1597 Gala Way, Richland, Washington. While excavating, Bertin's Pools workers struck and damaged an underground Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (CNGC) natural gas facility. The Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) report submitted by CNGC on August 10, 2023, indicated that Bertin's Pools was excavating without a valid request to locate underground utilities.
- 2. Analysis:**
The alleged violation concerns RCW 19.122.055(1)(a), which states, in part, that an excavator must contact the one-number locate center before beginning excavation. According to the Emergency Work Order provided by CNGC, Bertin's Pools was digging a

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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 violation occurred:
 - Enclose \$1,000 in payment of the penalty.
 - OR Attest that I have paid the penalty in full through the Commission’s payment portal.

- 2. **Accept conditions.** I admit that the violation occurred and enclose \$200 toward the payment of the penalty. I also accept the Commission’s offer to suspend, and ultimately waive, the remaining \$800 penalty amount subject to the following conditions:
 - o Company management and field crew responsible for excavation must attend Dig Safe training provided through NUCA within 90 days of service of this Penalty Assessment; and
 - o The Company must submit documentation of that attendance to the Commission; and
 - o The Company must not commit any further violations of RCW 19.122 within twelve (12) months of the date of this Notice.

- 3. **Contest the violation.** I believe that the alleged violation 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 violation, 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: 5/25/24 [Month/Day/Year], at kennewick, WA [City, State]

Bertin's pools and landscaping llc
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.