



## Media Release

Essex County Excavator Fined \$5,000

### **Essex County Excavator Fined \$5,000 for Pipeline Hit** *Sunrise Backhoe Excavating prosecuted for unsafe digging practices*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Toronto, ON, December 5, 2016)** – The Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) successfully prosecuted Sunrise Backhoe Service Limited, an Essex County excavator, for hitting a Windsor gas pipeline, contrary to the Oil and Gas Pipeline Systems Regulation ([Ontario 210/01](#)).

The Ontario Court of Justice in Windsor accepted a guilty plea from Sunrise and fined the company \$5,000 plus the mandatory 25% victim fine surcharge for a total penalty of \$6,250.

“This was a near miss for a potentially deadly scenario,” said John Marshall, Director of TSSA’s Fuels Safety Program. “Hitting a pipeline with pressurized gas can cause explosions, damage and death. That’s why Ontario has stringent laws around pipeline safety, including the rule to obtain a locate before breaking ground,” added Mr. Marshall.

In October 2014, a TSSA inspector received notice of a natural gas pipeline strike in the town of Lakeshore, Ontario and upon further investigation determined that the incident was the fault of Sunrise Backhoe Service Ltd. Installing sewer lines in the area, the excavator hit the pipeline with a backhoe, allowing the natural gas to flow freely into the atmosphere. The incident left residences in the area without gas for hours.

TSSA reminds the public that any excavation work must comply with Ontario’s safety laws, including obtaining a valid pipeline locate from the license holder or gas utility before breaking ground. Free locates can be obtained from Ontario One Call at 1-800-400-2255 or visit <http://on1call.com>.

Ontario Regulation 210/01 prohibits interfering with or damaging a pipeline and any damage and/or subsequent release of gas should be immediately reported to the Ministry of Environment’s Spills Action Centre at 1-800-268-6060 or by contacting TSSA toll-free at 1-877-682-8772.

#### *About TSSA*

The Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) is Ontario’s public safety regulator mandated by the Government of Ontario to enforce provincial safety regulations and enhance public safety. Throughout Ontario, TSSA regulates the safety of amusement devices, boilers and pressure vessels, elevating devices, fuels, operating engineers, ski lifts, and upholstered and stuffed articles. Its range of safety services include public education and consumer information, certification, licensing and registration, engineering design review, inspections, investigations, safety management consultation, and enforcement and prosecution activities. The organization’s vision is to be a valued advocate and recognized authority in public safety.

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For more information on the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, please visit [www.tssa.org](http://www.tssa.org).