



39379 SD Highway 46 · WAGNER, SOUTH DAKOTA 57380-7128  
TELEPHONE (605) 384-3654 · FAX (605) 384-5935

August 26, 2022

South Dakota One Call Notification Board  
PO Box 187  
Rapid City, SD 57709

Re: Complaint OC22-012

Sirs:

This complaint concerns work I was performing at a private residence at 310 Wendy Avenue in Wagner, SD on July 28, 2022.

My involvement included groundwork excavation for foundation purposes. The existing utility box was to be moved to allow for the addition to the house and both the line and box were scheduled for relocation the following day. In order to facilitate the relocation of cable TV and phone lines belonging to Fort Randall Telephone and continue with our work we hand-dug in order to find the Northwestern line approximately 5' out from the building foundation. At that point, we found it to sit 30" below the surface. I then chose to use a mini-excavator to pull 12"-14" of soil off the surface in order to make it easier for Fort Randall Communication to relocate the cable TV and telephone lines. Unfortunately, further from the house the wire rose to only 14" below surface. Because of a previous repair made sometime in past by an unknown party the wire had been pulled to the surface and fixed but never reburied to the original 30".

Although my assumption has obviously led us to this point, I would like to emphatically state that there was no intention to cause power disruption for our client or unnecessary work for Northwestern Energy. In fact, we believed we were doing all parties – including Northwestern -- a favor by exposing more of the work area. We at Wagner Building & Supply are diligently and constantly working to catch up on a backload of jobs and an incident such as this only serves to put us further behind...an irony that is not lost on me. We sincerely apologize for not more fully following the 811 regulation protocols. We believed that by hand exposing the line we were performing due diligence. We are all trying to work faster with less labor during these current times.

WBS does MANY jobs such as this, and I regret that this incident puts a stain on its reputation. This situation will certainly serve as a cautionary tale for future jobs, not just for me but for all WBS employees dealing with locates and 811 regulations. What we have done well at in the past, we vow to do better at in the future.

Sincerely:

James Bechen  
Wagner Building & Supply Co. Inc.

*OUR MISSION STATEMENT*

*"Our purpose is to enhance the lives of our employees, our customers and the people of our community"*