

# INSPECTING YOUR WATER SYSTEM

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By Nathan Wissenbach

It is important to inspect your water system at least once a month. By inspecting your water system you'd be able to identify what hydrants need to be repaired or replaced. You'll also be able to identify what valve risers need to be addressed. The most important reason to inspect your water system is to make sure people aren't digging on your water mains.

Here is a good example as to why it's important to inspect your water system. I've recently helped locate curb stops and mains for a municipality. As I was locating in an area where the main crossed through private property to another street, I came across a massive ditch that the homeowner dug to help drain a meter pit. The ditch was four feet wide and seven feet deep. This homeowner never called Dig Safe to identify where the water line was. The water operations specialist never knew this homeowner was digging over top of the water main. When I came across the ditch, I noticed that their 8-inch ductile water main was completely exposed. We called the homeowner and he drove to the dig site. The first question we asked him was when he started digging this ditch and why. He stated he started digging the ditch in early spring to help drain his meter pit and due to all the rain, it washed out the ditch even more making it the size that it is now. He stated he wanted to run a 4-inch drainpipe underneath the 8-inch main. The water operations specialist and I told the homeowner not to

run the pipe underneath the 8-inch main because it would weaken the support which could result in a main break. The operations specialist told the homeowner we were going to bring in material and cover up the water main to secure it from the elements. We also stated he could run his drain tile over the top of the water main, but it would need to be done as soon as possible as we would be back to cover the main. The homeowner completed the project that weekend and the operations specialist was able to cover the main with the right amount of material.

In conclusion, it's important to inspect your water system monthly in order to identify problems in your system that can be fixed when he would have time before they become an emergency.



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