



March 6, 2024

TESTIMONY OF SUE WALTZ

Owner / CFO of Waltz & Sons Propane

**BEFORE THE MAINE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, UTILITIES, AND TECHNOLOGY
IN SUPPORT OF LD An Act to Clarify the Definition of "Underground Facility" and
Reduce Administrative Burdens Under the So-called Dig Safe Law.**

Senator Lawrence, Representative Zeigler and members of the Energy, Utilities, and Technology Committee, I am pleased to have the opportunity to offer my comments regarding LD 2245.

I, on behalf of my company, Waltz & Sons Propane, respectfully request that the committee vote PASS on LD 2245.

We are a family owned and operated Propane company located in Buxton. We service a 98% residential customer base in Southern Maine. We have 14 employees including myself. We have participated as a registrant in the Dig Safe program since April 2021. We currently register our customers who lease propane tanks and have underground propane lines.

We receive over 2200 tickets each year, with that number growing each year as awareness, and compliance, of the program grows. We are required to reply to each ticket within 3 business days of receipt, except for emergency tickets which require a reply within 30 minutes. Each ticket takes approximately 10-15 minutes for review, research, and reply. Even more if we need to create a service ticket and pull a service technician from their job to visit the site to mark underground propane lines. For our company, 99% of our tickets do not result in a site visit to mark underground propane lines.

With almost 3 years of experience with Dig safe regarding underground propane lines we have found that the bulk of our registered accounts have underground lines that are

less than 25 feet, and most have only 10 feet of underground line as that is the minimum distance of a propane tank to a generator. Each of these accounts have a clear sightline from the tank to the equipment, or to the house, they service. Generally, they are also close to a home and require hand digging to install.

I feel very fortunate to have been included as a participant with the stakeholder's group that worked with the PUC on the resolve. As a group, we came up with a recommendation that will maintain the integrity of the Dig Safe System and reduce the administrative burden on companies which will encourage industry participation in the program.

If passed, I expect that LD 2245 will reduce the volume of Dig Safe tickets my company receives by over 95%. For a small family owned and operated residential propane business this is huge.

For these reasons, I, on behalf of my company, respectfully request that the committee vote PASS on LD 2245.

Thank you for your consideration.