

How to quickly bury electric fence cable under gates and across raceways - using a TerraTrencher

Electric fencing can be installed relatively quickly on a farm block. However, protecting the conducting cable when it needs to dive underground at gateways and across raceways can be tricky. It may involve some difficult digging, as often the surface is well compacted.

Of course, cable can be run across the surface or inside plastic piping but the movement of stock and farm machinery will eventually damage it.

Digging by hand can be time-consuming and using a conventional digger can be awkward where space is limited by fence lines and gateways.

A TerraTrencher is the ideal machine for this job. It was invented with work like this in mind and will cut a trench in minutes. The technique is as follows.

1. Work out the desired path for your cable trench, typically from one gatepost or strainer to another. If there are other buried services like a water main nearby, you may wish to carefully mark the route with spray-paint.
2. If the compacted ground is rocky, use a pick or crowbar to loosen the surface along the route. This will speed up the job and avoid unnecessary wear on your trencher teeth.
3. Using your TerraTrencher freehand (i.e. detached from the Wheel Support trolley) start your machine.
4. Move close to the starting post and position the cutting bar at a steep angle to the ground.
5. Using only moderate revs for good control, carefully begin a “plunge cut” near the base of the post, and continue to the desired depth. Take care not to contact the post itself, which may cause the trenching blade to kick back, in the same manner as a chainsaw does.
6. Repeat the process at the destination post, then complete the job by trenching freehand, or if it's a long run, drop your machine back into its Wheel Support (if available).
7. Ideally, slide your electric cable inside plastic water pipe (e.g. 15 mm black polyethylene) before laying it into your trench and backfilling. This provides additional protection from vehicle damage and makes it easy to repair/replace your cable at a later time without digging it up.