

2014 -- H 7714

LC004445

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS - EXCAVATION NEAR
UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITIES

Introduced By: Representatives Edwards, Finn, Williams, Canario, and Valencia

Date Introduced: February 27, 2014

Referred To: House Corporations

(Division of Public Utilities and Carriers)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Sections 39-1.2-5 and 39-1.2-11 of the General Laws in Chapter 39-1.2
entitled "Excavation Near Underground Utility Facilities" are hereby amended to read as follows:

39-1.2-5. Notice of excavation. -- Except as provided in section 39-1.2-9, any person,
public agency or public utility responsible for excavating within one hundred feet (100') or for
discharging explosives within one hundred feet (100') of a public utility facility shall notify the
association of the proposed excavation or discharge ~~by telephone~~ at least seventy-two (72) hours,
excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, but not more than thirty (30) days before
commencing the excavation or discharge of explosives. Actual excavation must thereupon
commence within thirty (30) days and be completed within sixty (60) days, including Saturdays,
Sundays and holidays, or the excavator must renotify the association. Each public utility shall,
upon receipt of each notice of excavation, mark within seventy-two (72) hours or, where
applicable in accordance with section 39-1.2-12, re-mark within forty-eight (48) hours, the
location of all underground facilities.

(b) Each excavator shall provide a description of the excavation location which shall
include:

(1) The name of the city or town where the excavation will take place;

(2) The name of the street, way or route number where appropriate;

(3) The name of the streets at the nearest intersection to the excavation;

1 (4) The numbered address of buildings closest to the excavation;

2 (5) Any other description which will accurately define the excavation location, including
3 landmarks and utility pole numbers; and

4 (6) The date and location of any blasting.

5 (c) If an excavator determines that a public utility facility has been mismarked, the
6 excavator may notify the association and the appropriate public utility shall remark no later than
7 three (3) hours after receipt of notification from the association. The failure to mark or re-mark
8 the location of all underground facilities upon each notice of excavation shall constitute a separate
9 violation of this chapter. Where an excavation is to be made by a contractor as part of the work
10 required by a contract with the state or with any political subdivision thereof or other public
11 agency, for the construction, reconstruction, relocation, or improvement of a public way or for the
12 installation of a railway track, conduit, sewer, or water main, the contractor shall be deemed to
13 have complied with the requirements of this section by giving one such notice as required by this
14 section except, when unanticipated obstructions are encountered, setting forth the location and the
15 approximate time required to perform the work involved to the association. In addition, the initial
16 notice shall indicate whether the excavation is anticipated to involve blasting and if so, the date
17 on which and specific location at which the blasting is to occur. If after the commencement of an
18 excavation, it is found there is an unanticipated obstruction requiring blasting, the excavator shall
19 give at least four (4) hours notice to the association before commencing the blasting. When
20 demolition of a building containing a public utility facility is proposed, the public utility or
21 utilities involved will be given written notice by registered mail at least ten (10) days prior to the
22 commencement of the demolition of the building. All notices shall include the name, address, and
23 telephone number of the entity giving notice, the name of the person, public agency, or public
24 utility performing the work, and the commencement date and proposed type of excavation,
25 demolition, or discharge of explosives. The association shall immediately transmit the
26 information to the public utilities whose facilities may be affected. An adequate record shall be
27 maintained by the association to document compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

28 **39-1.2-11. Damage -- Notice to public utility.** – (a) Upon the occurrence of any contact
29 with or damage to any pipe, cable or its protective coating, or any other underground facility of a
30 public utility, the ~~association~~ appropriate or affected public utility shall be notified immediately
31 by the person or public agency responsible for the operation causing the contact or damage prior
32 to back filling the excavation. Upon the receipt of the notice, the public utility shall immediately
33 dispatch personnel to the subject location to effect temporary or permanent repair of the damage.
34 Under no circumstances shall the excavator back fill or conceal the damaged area until the public

1 utility arrives at the subject location. Upon the occurrence of a serious electrical short, or the
2 escape of dangerous fluids or gases from a broken line, the person or public agency responsible
3 for the operations causing the damage shall evacuate the immediate area while awaiting the
4 arrival of the public utility personnel.

5 (b) Any person, public agency, or public utility shall report all suspected violations of this
6 chapter to the division of public utilities within thirty (30) days after learning of the
7 circumstances constituting the suspected violation.

8 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2014.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS - EXCAVATION NEAR
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1 This act would require those persons, public agencies or public utilities responsible for
2 excavating within one hundred feet (100') or for discharging explosives within one hundred feet
3 (100') of a public utility facility, who are already obligated to give timely and compliant notice to
4 the public utility association of said planned activity (otherwise referred to as "calling in for a
5 DigSafe ticket"), provide greater specificity when describing or defining the excavation/worksite
6 location.

7 This act would also expand the reporting obligations when underground facilities of a
8 public utility or any pipe, cable or its protective coating have been damaged.

9 This act would take effect on July 1, 2014.

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