

480.4 Required notice — location and marking of underground facilities — exception.

1. *a.* Except as otherwise provided in [this section](#), prior to any excavation, an excavator shall contact the notification center and provide notice of the planned excavation occurring after a forty-eight-hour period. The notice shall be valid for twenty-five calendar days beginning on the day the forty-eight-hour period concludes. If all locating and marking of underground facilities is completed prior to the expiration of the forty-eight-hour period, the excavator may proceed with excavation upon being notified by the notification center that the locating and marking of all underground facilities is complete. The notification center shall establish a toll-free telephone number to allow excavators to provide the notice required pursuant to [this subsection](#).

b. A notice provided pursuant to [this subsection](#) for a location within a city shall include the following information:

- (1) A street address or block and lot numbers, or both, of the proposed area of excavation.
- (2) The name and address of the excavator.
- (3) The excavator's telephone number.
- (4) The type and extent of the proposed excavation.
- (5) Whether the discharge of explosives is anticipated.
- (6) The date and time when excavation is scheduled to begin.
- (7) Approximate location of the excavation on the property.
- (8) If known, the name of the housing development and property owner.

c. A notice provided pursuant to [this subsection](#) for a location outside a city shall include the following information:

- (1) The name of the county, township, range, and section.
- (2) The name and address of the excavator.
- (3) The excavator's telephone number.
- (4) The type and extent of the proposed excavation.
- (5) Whether the discharge of explosives is anticipated.
- (6) The date and time when excavation is scheduled to begin.
- (7) Approximate location of the excavation on the property.
- (8) If known, the quarter section, 911 address and global positioning system coordinate, name of property owner, name of housing development with street address or block and lot numbers, or both.

d. For purposes of the requirements of [this section](#), an excavation commences the first time excavation occurs in an area that was not previously identified by the excavator in an excavation notice.

e. At the time of giving notice to the notification center pursuant to [this subsection](#), an excavator shall use white paint, white flags, white stakes, or a combination thereof, to mark the proposed area of excavation, unless one of the following applies:

- (1) The precise location, direction, size, and length of the proposed excavation area can be clearly and adequately defined and described during the call to the notification center or during an onsite preconstruction meeting.
- (2) Electronic means of white-lining is supported by the notification center and used by the excavator.
- (3) Physical premarking can be shown to be impractical.

2. The notification center, upon receiving notice from an excavator, shall immediately transmit the information contained in the notice to each operator in the area of the proposed excavation and provide the names of all operators in that area to the excavator. The notification center shall assign an inquiry identification number to each notice and shall maintain a record of each notice for at least six years from the date the notice is received. The notification center shall not assess an operator who requests in writing not to receive a notification of its own excavations for any portion of the costs associated with such excavations.

3. *a.* (1) An operator who receives notice from the notification center shall mark the horizontal location of the operator's underground facility and the excavator shall use due care in excavating in the marked area to avoid damaging the underground facility. The

operator shall complete such locating and marking, and shall notify the notification center that the marking is complete within the forty-eight-hour period unless otherwise agreed by the operator and the excavator. No later than the expiration of the forty-eight-hour period, the notification center shall notify the excavator of the underground facility locating and marking status, or the failure of the operator to notify the center that the locating and marking is complete. The locating and marking of the underground facilities shall be completed at no cost to the excavator. If, in the opinion of the operator, the planned excavation requires that the precise location of the underground facilities be determined, the excavator, unless otherwise agreed upon between the excavator and the operator, shall hand dig test holes or use nondestructive methods to determine the location of the facilities unless the operator specifies an alternate method.

(2) (a) The marking required under [this subsection](#) shall be done in a manner that will last for a minimum of five working days on any nonpermanent surface, or a minimum of ten working days on any permanent surface. If the excavation will continue for any period longer than such periods, the operator shall remark the location of the underground facility upon the request of the excavator. The request shall be made through the notification center.

(b) A locator shall use for marking a flag that includes the name of the operator and a contact phone number.

(3) Unless otherwise agreed by the operator and excavator in writing, no excavation shall be performed within twenty-five feet of an underground pipeline operating at one hundred fifty pounds per square inch or greater and that is equal to or greater than two inches in diameter unless a representative of the operator of the underground pipeline is present at the planned excavation area. This requirement shall not apply, however, when a representative of the operator fails to be present at the proposed excavation area at the time work is scheduled to commence or as otherwise agreed by the operator and excavator in writing. In this event, the excavator shall notify the operator that the representative failed to appear, and excavation operations can begin, provided the excavator uses due care to avoid damaging the underground facilities.

b. An operator who receives notice from the notification center and who determines that the operator does not have any underground facility located within the proposed area of excavation shall notify the notification center concerning this determination within the forty-eight-hour period. No later than the expiration of the forty-eight-hour period, the notification center shall notify the excavator that the operator does not have any underground facilities within the proposed area of excavation.

c. For purposes of [this chapter](#), the “horizontal location of any underground facility” is defined as including an area eighteen inches on either side of the underground facility.

d. For the purposes of [this chapter](#), notifications provided to the excavator by the operator or by the notification center shall be provided in a consistent manner to be established by the board.

4. An excavator is responsible for preserving the markings required in [subsection 3](#) at all times during the excavation. If the markings will be destroyed or otherwise altered during the excavation, the excavator must establish suitable reference points which will enable the excavator to locate the underground facility at all times during the excavation.

5. The operator shall mark the location of any underground facility to conform with the uniform color code established by the American public works association’s utility location and coordination council.

6. The only exception to [this section](#) shall be when an emergency exists. Under such conditions, excavation operations can begin immediately, provided reasonable precautions are taken to protect the underground facilities. The excavator shall notify the notification center of the excavation as soon as practical.

[92 Acts, ch 1103, §4; 98 Acts, ch 1049, §2; 2014 Acts, ch 1047, §1 – 6; 2018 Acts, ch 1026, §149; 2024 Acts, ch 1120, §5 – 7](#)

Referred to in [§480.11](#)

Subsection 1, paragraph a amended

Subsection 3, paragraphs a and b amended