

**480.1 Definitions.**

1. “Board” means the board of directors of the notification center.
2. “Damage” means any impact with, destruction, impairment, or penetration of, or removal of support from an underground facility, including damage to its protective coating, housing, or device.
3. “Emergency” means a condition where there is clear and immediate danger to life or health, or essential services, or a potentially significant loss of property.
4. a. “Excavation” means an operation in which a structure or earth, rock, or other material in or on the ground is moved, removed, or compressed, or otherwise displaced by means of any tools, equipment, or explosives and includes but is not limited to grading, trenching, tiling, digging, ditching, drilling, augering, tunneling, scraping, cable or pipe plowing, driving, and demolition of structures.  
b. “Excavation” does not include normal farming operations, residential, commercial, or similar gardening, the opening of a grave site in a cemetery, normal activities involved in land surveying pursuant to [chapter 542B](#), operations in a solid waste disposal site which has planned for underground facilities, the replacement of an existing traffic sign at its current location and at no more than its current depth, and normal road or highway maintenance which does not change the original grade of the roadway or the ditch.
5. “Excavator” means a person proposing to engage or engaging in excavation.
6. “Forty-eight-hour period” means a period of forty-eight consecutive hours beginning at 6:00 a.m. the next business day from the day the notification center receives a notice and excludes Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays.
7. “Locator” means a person proposing to engage or engaging in the location and marking of underground facilities under contract with or employed by an operator.
8. “Normal farming operations” means plowing, cultivation, planting, harvesting, and similar operations routine to most farms, but excludes chisel plowing, sub-soiling, or ripping more than fifteen inches in depth, drain tile excavating, terracing, digging or driving a post in a new location other than replacing a post while repairing a fence in its existing location, and similar operations.
9. “Notification center” means the statewide notification center established in [section 480.3](#).
10. “Operator” means a person owning or operating an underground facility including but not limited to public, private, and municipal utilities. An operator does not include a person who owns or otherwise lawfully occupies real property where an underground facility is located only for the use and benefit of the owner or occupant on the property.
11. “Person” means a person as defined in [section 4.1, subsection 20](#).
12. “Underground facility” means an item of personal property owned or leased by the operator which is buried or placed below ground for use in connection with the storage or conveyance of, or the provision of services supplying water, sewage, electronic, telephonic, or telegraphic communications, electric energy, hazardous liquids, or petroleum products including natural gas or other substances, and includes but is not limited to pipes, sewers, conduits, cables, valves, lines, wires, manholes, and attachments to such property but does not include sanitary sewer laterals, storm sewer laterals, and water service lines providing service to abutting private properties.

[87 Acts, ch 135, §1](#); [92 Acts, ch 1103, §1](#); [2015 Acts, ch 29, §62](#); [2024 Acts, ch 1120, §1](#)

Referred to in [§479.45, 479B.29](#)