

Michigan Damage Prevention Board

Best Practice 2015-03

Facilities and Appurtenances

MDPB Best Practice

Facility owners/operators are subject to the requirements of PA 174, specifically sections 460.724 and 460.727. An appurtenance to a facility is subject to the same requirements of that facility. For example, most municipal sewer systems consist of a main in public right of way and sewer leads on private property. The main and the leads are separate facilities as defined in 460.723(o). The connection between the main and leads, the stub, would be considered an appurtenance to the sewer main and would fall under the responsibilities of the owner/operator of the main. Further, any leads up to the edge of the public right of way are considered owned or operated by the municipality and are subject to the requirements of PA 174.

Public Act 174 References

Section 3 (o)

"Facility" or "underground facility" means an underground or submerged conductor, pipe, or structure, including, but not limited to, a conduit, duct, line, pipe, wire, or other device and its appurtenances used to produce, store, transmit, or distribute a utility service, including communications, data, cable television, electricity, heat, natural or manufactured gas, oil, petroleum products, steam, sewage, video, water, and other similar substances, including environmental contaminants or hazardous waste.

Appurtenances – as defined by Webster's New College Dictionary

- 1: an incidental right (as a right-of-way) attached to a principal property right and passing in possession with it
- 2: a subordinate part or adjunct
- 3: plural : accessory objects : apparatus

Discussion

Unmarked appurtenances are a threat to safety because the excavator is not aware of the presence of the facility or does not have enough information to define a caution zone for safe excavation. Excavation activity can lead to damage to the unmarked appurtenance. In the case of sewer leads, the excavator might be unaware of the damage, resulting in a cross bore through the sewer lead. Efforts to remove the subsequent blockage from the sewer can result in serious safety incidents when gas, electric or other utility lines are damaged during the clean out process.

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Revision 2 Date _____

The MDPB Best Practices are presented as a general guide. The MDPB encourages all users to consult and consider not only the MDPB Best Practices, but also (i) employer practices, (ii) industry practices, (iii) federal and state statutes and regulations, (iv) building and fire codes, and (v) local laws, regulations, and ordinances.