



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Stephan Burgos

October 20, 2021

Division of Building Safety Damage Prevention Subcommittee
Merril Quayle, P.E.
mquayle@pocatello.us

RE: Request to review for Design Locates

Dear Division of Building Safety Damage Prevention Subcommittee Members:

The City of Boise appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the proposed damage prevention code changes. The City of Boise feels it can bring a holistic perspective because we have an array of utilities which include sanitary sewer, streetlights, geothermal, fiber optics, pressurized irrigation, biosolids line, storm drain, park utilities, and airport utilities. In addition, the City also completes a considerable amount of inhouse engineering and design work. These two aspects allow us to see it from and utility owner and engineering and design viewpoint.

The City believe that this change could have a significant increase in the number of dig-line requests we are required to physically mark-out each year without much improvement in the number of damages, the cost of which would be required to be paid for by our citizens. The City is concerned that this added cost may not result in an equal benefit, the reasons being are as follow.

Often during the design process, the City may look at multiple routes and larger areas and complete survey work multiple times. Even after research and design, projects sometimes get canceled. Requiring locates for all pre-design requests can lead to requiring utilities to locate in the same location multiple times. This can be a very large burden/expense to the utility and its customers.

As utility locators, we are happy to send maps, complete meet requests, and even locate our utility in a small area if it is a potential conflict with a project on a case-by-case basis. These activities do not require a large time commitment and do not take away from the important work of excavation locates. We do not have the resources to locate facilities for all design locates on a regular basis and this change could create an additional need to add resources to do so and this burden would be at the expense of our citizens.

As designers and engineers, we have started to hire independent locators to locate facilities during design that may have critical horizontal conflicts. We also pot-hole

facilities that may have critical vertical conflicts. This process has avoided many potential construction changes and damages and puts the pressure on the design team to decide which utilities are worth the money to locate. We see this as a viable solution rather than changing an already complex Idaho Code.

Alternatively, we propose to add an option of charging a fee (fixed amount or time and material based on scope of locate) for pre-design locates. This solution could have the same effect as hiring a private locator. It would require designers and engineers to consider what portion of their project has critical utilities that need location prior to design and reduce the number/size of pre-design locate requests. It also provides a convenient option for locates rather than hiring and scheduling private locators.

Overall, the City is curious what issue is trying to be solved by adding the new language. The new language burdens all utilities, but many utilities already provide comprehensive location information if personally requested.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by DeAnn
Brown
Date: 2021.10.22
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DeAnn Brown, P.E.
Engineer I

cc: James Parady, P.E., City Engineer – City of Boise Public Works
Jason Taylor, P.E., Asst. City Engineer- DIS Department - City of Boise Public Works
Rich Wiebe P.E., Asst. City Engineer – Sewer Department -City of Boise Public Works
Mike Sheppard, P.E., Engineer II – Sewer Department -City of Boise Public Works
Jon Gunnerson, P.E., Engineer II- Geothermal Department -City of Boise Public Works
Mary Grant – Municipal Attorney III - City of Boise Legal Department
Doug Rhinehart – PW Project Coordinator - City of Boise Public Works
Tom Marshall – PW Streetlight Program Supervisor - City of Boise Public Works
Todd Critser, P.L.S. -Survey Department Manager - City of Boise Public Works

